

Pictures of the year
G2 special issue

The Guardian

Wednesday
28 December 2022
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From £1.85 for subscribers

Charities forced to shut up shop as Brexit hits funding

Exclusive Regional aid misses out after delays in allocating new money

Lisa O'Carroll
Heather Stewart

Hundreds of voluntary organisations have been forced to shut up shop or scale back operations because of government delays in replacing EU funding, the Guardian has learned, as the consequences of Brexit continue to ripple out across the UK.

Three years after Boris Johnson was swept to power promising to "get Brexit done", a Guardian reporting project finds employers, farmers and charities are still wrestling with the reality of life outside the EU.

A new analysis of government funding intended to replace EU support, shows multimillion-pound gaps in funding for farming and economic development.

The Wales Council of Voluntary Action (WCVA), a national umbrella organisation involving charities that relied on the money from the European social fund to pay wages, is among those that revealed little-known new Brexit problems.

The government announced exact allocations of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) in December to replace the £11bn EU economic and regional development fund (ERDF) and European social fund. But by that time it was too late for "hundreds of organisations", said Matthew Brown, director of operations at the WCVA.

"We're all having to lay off staff because the UK SPF has not come in on time," he added.

The Wales economy minister and Labour Senedd member, Vaughan Gething, says Westminster's carve-up of replacement funds has left Wales with £772m less in ERDF and ESF funds, a figure denied by the government. "The entire approach to the Shared Prosperity Fund has been chaotic," he said.

Scotland also claims it is worse off through the replacement funding. The employment minister in Scotland Richard 7 →

Ministers accused of failing over PPE fraud

Exclusive
Aubrey Allegretti

Ministers have been accused of making a "pitiful attempt" to recoup taxpayers' money wasted on fraudulent Covid contracts after it emerged that only a fraction of the estimated total had been recovered so far.

About £18m has been retrieved by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) through checks on personal protective equipment (PPE) contracts identified as "high risk" and through "contract management", the Guardian can reveal.

Will Quince, a health minister, said the figure was correct as of 12 December and stressed that the government was working to "prevent loss".

However, the amount of taxpayers' money clawed back is significantly less than that believed to have been lost through PPE fraud.

By January 2022, the DHSC said it had spent £12.6bn on PPE. It estimated that 5% of this could be fraud and error - worth £630m.

The Public Accounts Committee, which scrutinises the value for money of government spending, also said a stockpile of items worth £3.9bn were not needed. It added there were disputes with more than 100 suppliers over £2.7bn worth of stock - mostly over concerns about the quality of PPE provided.

Daisy Cooper, the Liberal Democrats' health spokesperson, tabled the written question to Quince that revealed the sum recovered so far. She criticised the government for having "frittered a" billions on useless PPE, and said the £18m figure was "a damning indictment" of the Conservatives' record on "dodgy Covid contracts". She said: "These pitiful attempts to recoup the money lost is adding insult to injury. Conservative ministers must step up efforts to recover the money wasted on Covid contracts handed 2 →



PHOTOGRAPH: ANDREW FUSEK PETERS/SWNS

UK wildlife hit in year of weather extremes

Fierce storms, searing heatwaves and prolonged cold snaps during 2022 have devastated some of the most precious flora and fauna in Britain, the National Trust has warned. **News** *Page 5* →

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News



About 90% of bacon sold in the UK is thought to contain nitrites, which have been linked to bowel, breast and prostate cancers
PHOTOGRAPH: LAURIPATTERSON/GETTY IMAGES

Government urged to ban nitrites from food after research adds to evidence of cancer risk

David Batty

A leading scientist has urged ministers to ban the use of nitrites in food after research highlighted the "clear" risk of developing cancer from eating processed meat such as bacon and ham too often.

The study by scientists from Queen's University Belfast found mice fed a diet of processed meat containing the chemicals, which are used to cure bacon and give it its distinctive colour, developed 75% more tumours than mice fed nitrite-free pork. It also found mice fed nitrite-cured pork developed 82% more tumours in the bowel than the control group.

Among those who conducted the research trial, in which mice were fed a diet of 15% nitrite-containing processed meat, was Prof Chris Elliott, who led the government's investigation into the horsemeat scandal.

Elliott called on the government to change its position on banning the use of nitrites in processed meat in light of the study.

He added: "The results of this new study make the cancer risk associated with nitrite-cured meat even cleare. The everyday consumption of nitrite-containing bacon and ham poses a very real risk to public health."

The study found that mice fed a similar amount of nitrite-free pork did not see an increase in tumours, further demonstrating that consuming the chemicals has a substantial impact on cancer risk.

Dr Brian Green, one of the authors of the report, which is published in the journal Nature, said: "The results from our study clearly show that not all processed meats carry the same risk of cancer and that the consumption of nitrite-containing processed meat exacerbates the development of cancerous tumours."

About 90% of bacon sold in Britain is thought to contain nitrites, which research studies have linked to the development of bowel, breast and prostate cancers. The chemical is also used in some continental meat products such as frankfurter sausages.

Although a diet of 15% nitrite-containing processed meat is a relatively high intake, the researchers suggested that their findings show consuming even lower quantities can still increase the risk of cancer.

The European Food Safety Authority recently published an updated draft opinion that suggested levels of nitrites in food could indicate a health concern. Meanwhile, the French government has committed to eliminate the use of nitrites in food production where possible after its national health agency published a study in July that concluded the chemicals increase the risk of cancer.

Elliott, who is among a group of scientists, MPs and peers who are urging UK ministers to ban the use of the chemicals in processed meat, added: "The European Food Safety Authority and the French government are following the facts. It's time the UK government did too."

Rick Mumford, the head of science, evidence and research at the Food Standards Agency, said the new study would be evaluated. He added: "Nitrates are important preservatives which hinder the growth of harmful organisms, in particular the bacteria responsible for botulism – which can be life-threatening. They are regulated as a food additive and before authorisation must pass a robust safety assessment. Because of the possible link between eating too much red and processed meats and bowel cancer, the government recommends limiting consumption of these products to 70g per day."

Nitrites have been identified by the World Health Organization as a cause of 32,000 bowel cancer cases every year.

Murder inquiry launched after man stabbed on dancefloor

Jessica Murray
Midlands correspondent

Police have launched a murder investigation after a man was stabbed on the dancefloor of a nightclub in Birmingham on Boxing Day.

The victim was named as 23-year-old Cody Fisher, with his family saying in a statement the perpetrators "have broken our hearts" and they have lost their "best friend".

West Midlands police said they were called to Crane nightclub in Digbeth just before 11.45pm on Monday. Despite efforts to save Fisher, he was pronounced dead about 30 minutes later.

Detectives are viewing CCTV from the nightclub and are urging anyone who was in the area at the time to get in touch. No one has been arrested.

DI Michelle Thurgood, who is leading the investigation, said: "This was a young man enjoying himself with friends on a Boxing Day night out and our thoughts are with his friends and family today. We know there were hundreds of people in the nightclub at the time. While we've spoken to a number of them already, we still need to hear from anyone who was there and who witnessed or even filmed what happened.

"We believe that the victim was approached by a group of people and was then stabbed, so we're working hard to identify all of those involved."

The stabbing took place towards the end of an event headlined by the Italian musician and DJ Marco Carola.

Crane nightclub said: "We are deeply shocked and saddened that a man lost his life last night as our Boxing Day event came to a close. Our thoughts are with the victim, and his family and friends."



Cody Fisher, 23, died after being stabbed at a club in Birmingham

Continued *from page 1*

Ministers accused of failing to recoup PPE fraud millions

out to their wealthy friends and donors during the pandemic."

The Guardian understands that the Lib Dems are planning to table an amendment to the upcoming Procurement Bill, which will have its second reading on 9 January, to ban so-called "VIP lanes" that saw contracts directly awarded to some firms.



Michelle Mone, the Tory peer at the centre of a 'VIP lane' scandal

Cooper said the move would stop "this staggering waste of public money from happening again" by preventing preferential treatment in government procurement processes being given to organisations and individuals recommended by MPs and peers.

The use of the VIP lane has come under renewed scrutiny since the Guardian revealed that Michelle Mone and her children secretly received £29m originating from the profits of a business, PPE Medpro, that was awarded large government contracts and placed in the "VIP lane" after she recommended it to ministers.

A DHSC spokesperson said: "We continue to sell, donate, repurpose and recycle excess PPE in the most cost-effective way, as well as seeking to recover costs from suppliers wherever possible to ensure taxpayer value for money.

"We are also exploring innovative solutions to reprocess excess PPE into materials or new products that have further uses."

The DHSC has also said it prevented £139m of fraud occurring due to extra checks put in place.

Swift propels UK vinyl sales past CDs for first time since the 1980s

Mark Sweney



▶ *Taylor Swift in concert at L'Olympia in Paris in September 2019. The 33-year-old has sold 80,000 copies of her latest album, Midnights*

PHOTOGRAPH: DAVE HOGAN/ ABA/GETTY

Taylor Swift's legions of fans have helped propel the amount spent on vinyl records above CDs for the first time since the 1980s, when stars including Rick Astley, T'Pau and Pet Shop Boys topped the charts.

Her loyal fanbase of "Swifties", who have made the 33-year-old's latest album Midnights the biggest-selling vinyl record of the century in the UK, helped push annual revenues made by vinyl album sales above the CD for the first time since 1987.

While CD sales have endured years of precipitous declines – having peaked at 2.45bn globally in 2000 just as digital music emerged to presage the streaming revolution that has transformed music listening – the classic LP has somewhat counterintuitively experienced a striking revival in popularity.

This year vinyl album sales are expected to grow for the 15th consecutive year to about 5.5m, the most since 1990, with the 80,000 copies of Swift's Midnights the most of any album in a calendar year this century.

What started as a vinyl renaissance built largely by older music fans seeking collectible editions of treasured albums – mostly classic artists such as the Beatles, David Bowie and Pink Floyd – has since spread to younger generations of fans in love with retro music formats including cassettes. Unusually, eight of this year's top 10 sellers, which will officially be revealed in the new year after final sales are tallied, are new albums released in 2022.

"It's a watershed moment for the entire music industry," said Kim Bayley, chief executive of the Entertainment Retailers Association (ERA). "After the CD came along and pretty much wiped out the vinyl business, few of us would have believed a renaissance like this was possible."

The pandemic accelerated music-buying habits as fans unable to go to gigs and events channelled their spare cash into building up their record collections at home.

> *'Will CDs disappear? Given how wrong we were about vinyl, it would be foolish to write them off'*
>
> **Kim Bayley**
> *Chief executive, ERA*

In 2021, revenues from vinyl album sales rose 23% to £135.6m, while CD sales continued to fall by 3.9% to £150m, according to the ERA.

This year revenue from CD sales, which overtook vinyl in 1988 and cassettes in 1991, will fall below that of vinyl LPs by as much as £20m, according to sales figures. More than 14m CDs were sold last year, with a significant double-digit percentage annual fall expected when official figures for 2022 come in next week.

"Will the CD disappear? Of course its prospects don't look good right now, but it offers a permanence and robustness and quality which is unique," said Bayley. "Given how wrong we were about vinyl, it would be foolish to write off the CD for ever."

While LP sales will continue to rise to a more than four-decade high in 2022, music fans appear to finally be reaching "peak vinyl" with figures expected to show growth in unit sales slowing to just a few percentage points year on year. "As the LP marks its 75th anniversary in 2023, it's as relevant as ever," said Geoff Taylor of music industry trade body the BPI.



▲ *Swift's Midnights, this century's biggest-selling vinyl record in the UK*

2022's top spins
Bestselling vinyl albums

1 Midnights – Taylor Swift

2 Harry's House – Harry Styles

3 The Car – Arctic Monkeys

4 C'mon You Know – Liam Gallagher

5 Wet Leg – Wet Leg

6 Will of the People – Muse

7 Rumours – Fleetwood Mac

8 Skinny Fia – Fontaines DC

9 Being Funny in a Foreign Language – 1975

10 AM – Arctic Monkeys

Source: Entertainment Retailers Association

Mel C cancels Poland gig over 'issues brought to my attention'

Josh Halliday

The former Spice Girl Melanie C said she cancelled a performance in Poland on New Year's Eve after being made aware of issues "that do not align with the communities I support".

She did not elaborate but was praised by allies of the LGBTQ+ community. The singer, whose real name is Melanie Chisholm, was reportedly due to perform in a televised concert for the Polish state broadcaster Telewizja Polska (TVP).

She tweeted on Monday night: "In light of some issues that have been brought to my attention, that do not align with the communities I support, I'm afraid I will no longer be able to perform in Poland as planned on New Year's Eve.

"I hope to be back there very soon. Hope you're all having a wonderful Christmas and best wishes for 2023. Melanie xxx."

Replying to her statement, Twitter users described her as a "hero" and an "ally".

Although homosexuality has been legal in Poland since 1932, same-sex marriage and civil unions are not recognised, adoption for same-sex couples is illegal, and surgery is required in order to legally change gender status.

Poland ranks bottom among EU countries in a league table for LGBTQ+ rights compiled by the European region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association.

Chisholm is known as a strong ally of the LGBTQ+ community. She won celebrity ally of the year at the British LGBT awards last year.

In a statement reported by Polish media, TVP claimed Chisholm had resigned from the show in the city of Zakopane "under the pressure of online comments".

It said: "Melanie C is one of the many stars of this year's 'New Year's Eve Dreams with Dwójka', who accepted the invitation and signed a contract with Telewizja Polska and will celebrate the new year with us and today – under the pressure of online comments – she unexpectedly resigned from the performance.

"The company was surprised to hear about the artist's change of plans.

"TVP reminds that New Year's Eve is a concert for everyone who wants to welcome the new year with good fun."

Samuel Pereira, a journalist at the state broadcaster, posted a video of Chisholm performing in Russia in 2018 and tweeted: "Melanie C in a country that does not 'contradict her views' – Russia."



The ex-Spice Girl is a strong LGBTQ+ ally



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Blair and Osborne back chef on school meals
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Train pain
Chaos follows RMT strikes
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◀ *Silver-studded blue butterflies, and natterjack toads, above, suffered in 2022. Choughs, top, had a better year*
PHOTOGRAPHS: UKBMS/GETTY

Extreme weather wreaks havoc in 'challenging year for nature'

Steven Morris

This year's tumultuous weather – including fierce storms, searing heat and deep cold snaps – has devastated some of the UK's most precious flora and fauna, a leading conservation charity has said.

The extreme conditions have made survival very difficult for animals, from toads and bats to birds and butterflies, and from great trees to meadowland flowers.

The National Trust, which produces an annual Christmas audit of how the year's weather has affected nature, said the climate emergency meant that what in 2002 felt like extreme events were going to become the new norm, creating significant challenges for many species.

The charity's climate crisis adviser, Keith Jones, said: "This year's weather has been challenging for nature. Drought, high temperatures, back-to-back storms, unseasonal heat, a cold snap and floods mean nature, like us, is having to cope with a new litany of weather extremes.

"It is a stark illustration of the sort of difficulties many of our species will face if we don't do more to mitigate rising temperatures and help nature's survival. Weather experts predict that the future will see more torrential downpours, along with very dry and hot summers.

"We're going to experience more floods, droughts, heatwaves, extreme storms and wildfires – and they will go from bad to worse, breaking records with ever-alarming frequency if we don't limit our carbon emissions."

One of the most obvious results of the hot summer were wildfires that devastated heathland areas in Cornwall, Devon and Dorset, destroying habitats for species such as the silver-studded blue butterfly, rare sand lizards and smooth snakes.

The heat also had other unexpected consequences. At the height of summer, rangers in Wallington, Northumberland, found young bats dehydrated and disoriented. They rehydrated the bats using tiny pipettes before placing them in a cooler, dark place where they could rest and recover and fly to rejoin their colony at dusk.

The drought was terrible news for natterjack toads, which need clusters of pools to travel across dune slacks. The ponds at Formby in Merseyside dried up and no toadlets were spotted.

The shorter flowering season caused by the drought also affected pollinators. Many butterfly species had a poor year as a result of depleted food sources over their peak summer period.

Numbers of the black darter, the UK's smallest resident dragonfly, have been dropping for half a century, but experts were shocked that none were spotted this year at one of its strongholds, Black Down in the South Downs national park. The fear is that the summer was too dry for the black darter larvae to survive.

Swifts returned to the east coast of England later than usual and in lower numbers, and those that did return had low breeding success, probably because of the scarcity of flying insects, especially aphids, whose numbers were down because of the heat.

It was an awful June for the tern colonies on Strangford Lough in Northern Ireland when south-easterly gales, tidal surges and periods of torrential rain washed away nests.

There were some winners. The lack of late frosts in the spring led to a decent apple harvest, and it has been a "mast year" – an excellent one – for some nuts and berries, but even this is thought to be partly the result of the stress caused to trees by the drought conditions. It has also been a good year for the chough, a symbol of Cornwall, with the population swelling to about 200 birds.

Ben McCarthy, the National Trust's head of nature conservation, said an alarm had been sounded: "Some habitats like wetlands and grasslands completely dried out in some areas, impacting all those species that make them their home. Many species suffered, with notable reductions in the number of flying insects such as butterflies and bumblebees as flowering plants withered and died."

He said some species would adapt better than others. "Wildlife that utilise a broad range of habitats, so called generalist species, such as robins, wood pigeons or common blue butterflies that we may see in our gardens, are better able to respond to the pressures of extreme weather as there is more space to support them."



▲ *Sandwich terns in Rye Harbour*

Hepatitis C set to be stamped out in England by 2025 after screening push

David Batty

The NHS is set to eliminate hepatitis C in England by 2025 due to targeted screening campaigns for those at risk and effective drug treatments, according to health officials.

NHS England said the measures are helping to dramatically cut deaths from the virus five years ahead of global targets.

Deaths from hepatitis C – including liver disease and cancer – have fallen by 35%, since NHS England struck a five-year deal worth almost £1bn to buy antiviral drugs for thousands of patients in 2018.

The World Health Organization's target of a 10% reduction in hepatitis C-related death by 2020 has been exceeded threefold in England.

An NHS screening programme launched in September is also enabling up to 80,000 people unknowingly living with Hepatitis C to get a diagnosis and treatment sooner by searching health records for key risk factors, such as historic blood transfusions or those with HIV.

Prof Sir Stephen Powis, NHS England's national medical director, said the health service is "leading the world" in the drive to save lives and eliminate hepatitis C while also tackling health inequalities.

He said: "Thanks to targeted screening and because the NHS has a proven track record of striking medicine agreements that give patients access to the latest drugs, we are on track to beat global targets and become the first country to eliminate hepatitis C."

Dedicated "find, test and treat" programmes have also helped the NHS reduce hepatitis C cases among vulnerable communities such as the homeless, who are more at risk due to substance misuse, sharing toothbrushes or razors and other lifestyle factors associated with sleeping rough.

NHS staff are visiting at-risk communities in specially equipped trucks to test for the virus and carry out liver health checks with portable scans to detect liver damage.

Hepatitis C is usually spread through blood-to-blood contact. It can be spread by sharing unsterilised needles – particularly needles used to inject recreational drugs. If left untreated, the virus can cause liver cancer and liver failure.

Homelessness charity St Mungo's is providing same-day screenings along with help to complete treatment as part of the programme.

'More paperwork, stress, everything' Trading with the EU after Brexit

Heather Stewart

'There was this time when they had problems with us sending elderberries - the most benign of foods. Because of which, they stopped the whole consignment for over a month!"

Inside an anonymous-looking industrial unit on the outskirts of Reading, where a warm fragrance of tea and spices fills the air, Vishaka Chhetri Agarwal and her husband, Neeraj, are venting their frustrations at doing business with the EU after Brexit. After all, the then prime minister insisted there would be no additional red tape. Yet, just like the traders in Northern Ireland whom Boris Johnson told to chuck any customs forms they were required to complete in the bin, the Agarwals have found the reality to be rather different.

Both born in Darjeeling, India, they have lived in the UK for 17 years, since Neeraj took his MBA at Cambridge. Their business - Tea People - is a social enterprise, with 50% of the profits going to support schools in tea-growing regions.

"We import tea and ingredients from all around the world. Some of it we repackage, but a lot of it we create our own blends and our own mixes," explains Neeraj.

Since Brexit, new customs checks and complying with EU VAT rules have created endless headaches. "It's definitely increased paperwork, stress, everything," says Vishaka, a microbiologist by background, who creates their blends.



▲ *The jewellery maker Lizzie Heyes, who can't afford an EU intermediary*

Before Brexit, they were able to send a batch of tea to the packing company they work with in Spain and receive it back, neatly parcelled into little paper envelopes, within three weeks. Now, Neeraj says, the tea hasn't completed even the first leg of its journey in that time.

"When we send a consignment over to them, almost every single one is held by customs and they always ask for extra documentation. Next time, we send all of those same documents, the same commodities - but they still come back asking for more."

They had built up a loyal market in several EU countries, including Germany and France, selling both directly to customers from their website, and via Amazon. But they have opted to stop doing so for now after customers complained about lengthy delays - and then were sometimes double-charged VAT when their tea finally arrived.

Two years after Johnson signed the Brexit trade and cooperation agreement (TCA), William Bain, head of trade policy at the British Chambers of Commerce, says such experiences have been replicated across thousands of businesses.

In a recent BCC survey of more than 1,100 businesses marking two years since the TCA was signed, 77% of firms trading with the EU said the deal was not helping them to increase sales or grow their business. More than half (56%) reported difficulties adapting to the new rules for exporting goods, and 45% said the same for services.

"These are structural barriers," says Bain. "You can distinguish this from the period in 2021 when we had a bit of extra queueing at Dover or Calais. That's about how customs officials are applying the rules; but we've reached a reasonably stable position around that, and the structural problem is the operation of some of these rules and the paperwork requirements, and those have not improved at all."

He cites in particular the border checks faced by food exporters, and issues with administering VAT. In theory, small exporters can use the EU's online import one-stop shop (IOSS), to help smooth the charging of VAT, but it requires them to work with a "fiscal representative" based in the EU, adding to costs - and some businesses the Guardian spoke to said it was still hit or miss.

Lizzie Heyes's London-based jewellery business, Secret Halo, was exporting to customers across Europe before Brexit via her website, but is now only selling through marketplaces such as Etsy and Amazon, which take a cut of each transaction.

"It's too costly for someone like myself to pay for the services of an intermediary in the EU. So that's why I've turned to marketplaces to navigate those costs and the red tape for me," she says.

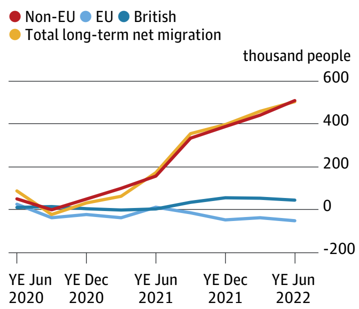
Even with an online marketplace to navigate the IOSS system, there are still problems. "EU customers have lost faith. I've had so many where I have made the sales through marketplaces, where they've been charged twice - so, disgruntled customers."

The BCC is urging the government to try to negotiate for the requirement for an EU-based fiscal representative to be lifted - something Bain says could be done through the EU-UK "specialised committees" that oversee the operation of the TCA.

In the medium term, it is calling for a veterinary agreement with the EU, to alleviate some of the checks to which agrifood exporters are subject; and in common with other trade bodies, including the manufacturers' group Make UK, it would like to see UK businesses continue to be able to use the European CE mark for product standards. The UK has set up its own alternative - the UKCA - but



Long-term net migration to the UK in 2022 was driven by non-EU nationals

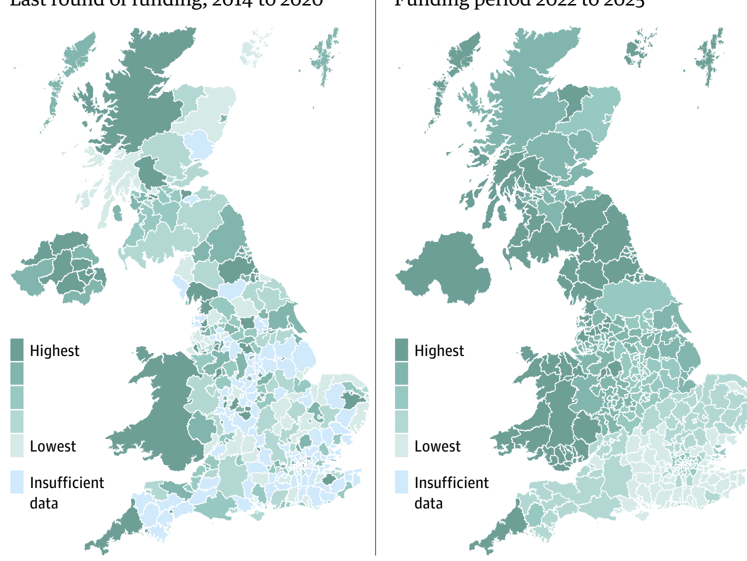


Source: ONS. Long-term international migration, provisional: year ending June 2022

How the pot is shared out: comparison of relative distribution of per capita funding, pre- and post-Brexit

European regional development funds and European structural funds
Last round of funding, 2014 to 2020

UK shared prosperity fund (new post-Brexit UK dispensation)
Funding period 2022 to 2025



Guardian graphic. Sources: Guardian analysis of data from the European Commission, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Welsh government, Scottish government, Northern Irish government. Note: Wales and Northern Ireland treated as single entities pre- and post-Brexit respectively

Brexit Undone?
Read the second part of our new series in tomorrow's paper



MONTAGE: GUARDIAN DESIGN

firms wanting to export to to the EU must also comply with the CE system and are reluctant to submit to two sets of regulatory checks.

Many larger companies have been able to cope better with the additional requirements of selling into the EU market – and bear the costs more easily. Make UK recently found that only a third of member firms are still struggling to comply.

But economists say the broader picture of the UK's performance in international trade since Brexit is one of becoming a little less open to the world. The independent Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) estimates that, over the medium term, Brexit is likely to reduce the "trade intensity" of the UK economy – effectively the share of trade in GDP – by 15%.

"The latest evidence suggests that Brexit has had a significant adverse impact on UK trade, via reducing both overall trade volumes and the number of trading relationships between UK and EU firms," the OBR said in its latest Economic and Fiscal Outlook, published alongside last month's budget. While exports to the EU declined sharply at around the time of the end of the Brexit transition period, they have since more than recovered.

But John Springford, of the Centre for European Reform, says it's important to track the UK's performance against other, similar economies. "If you compare UK trade after leaving the single market to UK trade before, then you're not really comparing apples with apples, because you need to compare with other countries. There's been a big global goods trade boom since the end of the pandemic," he says.

Springford's latest estimates using this approach suggested the UK's total trade in goods – imports plus exports – was 7%, or £15bn, lower in the second quarter of 2022 than it would have been if it had tracked comparable economies. On services, he finds little difference.

Stephen Hunsaker, of the thinktank UK in a Changing Europe, says a shift is clearly visible from when the trade deal was signed on 31 December 2020. "It is clear that the thing that impacted trade openness the most was the ending of the Brexit transition period."

"It's been difficult, and we've heard that from businesses of all shapes and sizes," says Marco Forgione, the director general of the Institute of Export and International Trade, a membership body that delivers government-funded training to businesses. He detects a tacit acknowledgement of these challenges from the Rishi Sunak government, after the combativeness of the Johnson era, and Liz Truss's brief, boosterish premiership.

"In the conversations with ministers and officials, there seems to be a much more pragmatic approach to building a constructive relationship with the EU," he says.

Sunak recently told the US president, Joe Biden, that he would like to see the standoff over the Northern Ireland protocol resolved by the time of the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday agreement next April, and has shelved the highly controversial Northern Ireland bill while talks take place.

Forgione argues that exporters can and will continue to adapt to the new trading environment. "I think there are huge opportunities, and there is potential," he says, insisting many of his members are positive about the future.

A government spokesperson points to the benefits of trading outside the EU: "The trade deals we're negotiating will open exciting opportunities that reflect the changing nature of global trade. Europe's share of global GDP will fall from 19.9% to 14.1% by 2050, while our deals with India, Australia and the trans-Pacific CPTPP will latch our economy to some of the fastest growing markets across Asia and the Indo-Pacific."

Yet the former agriculture secretary George Eustice recently criticised the Australia deal for making too many concessions; and the OBR has suggested these agreements "will not have a material impact, and any effect will be gradual".

Major changes to the EU deal appear highly unlikely, meanwhile. The TCA will be subject to a five-year review by 2026 – after the next general election; but Labour has made clear that should it win a majority it has no intention of unpicking it. "We will make Brexit work. We don't believe it is in the national interest to reopen this debate," says the shadow international trade secretary, Nick Thomas-Symonds. "We have set out our red lines, and there are three of them: no return to the single market, no return to the customs union and no return to freedom of movement."

Instead, Labour is promising to try to negotiate piecemeal reforms, including a veterinary agreement of the kind the BCC would like to see, and mutual recognition of professional standards.

Any tweaks won when the TCA is eventually reviewed will come too late for the jewellery-maker Heyes and her fellow small business-owners, however, many of whom she says have stopped selling to the EU, or ceased trading altogether.

"It's all everyone talks about on the Facebook groups," she says. "It's just moaning about Brexit and how it's killed their businesses."

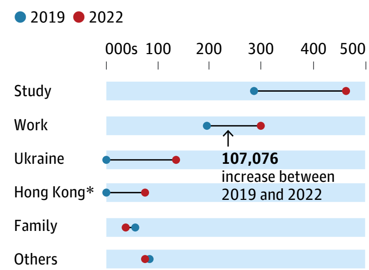
▼ *Founders Vishaka and Neeraj Agarwai at Tea People's distribution warehouse in Reading. Boris Johnson promised no extra red tape, but the reality has been different*
PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN GODWIN/THE GUARDIAN

> ***'Almost every consignment is held by customs and they ask for extra documentation'***
>
> **Vishakar and Neeraj Agarwal**
> *Tea People*



Visa schemes for Ukraine and Hong Kong accounted for 19% of non-EU visas granted in 2022

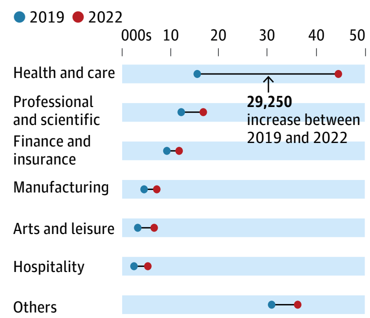
Change in visas granted, 2019 to year ending June 2022



Source: Migration observatory analysis of Home Office immigration data. *Hong Kong British Nationals Overseas visa scheme

Demand in the health and care sector was the largest driver of the increase in skilled worker visas

Change in skilled worker and transfer visas granted, 2019 to year ending June 2022



Source: Migration observatory analysis of Home Office Immigration data. Transfer visas refers to intracompany transfers sponsorships

Continued *from page 1*

Charities forced to shut up shop after Brexit funding cut

Lochhead said: "The UK government's Shared Prosperity Fund fails to deliver replacement funding which was promised to Scotland, meaning communities across the country will miss out on around £337m of investment from 2022-25."

Meanwhile, many exporters remain exasperated at the barriers to trade with the EU bloc, including customs checks and additional bureaucracy; while industries previously heavily dependent on low-skilled EU labour, including hospitality and food production, grapple with staff shortages.

Employers claim that while the new skilled worker visa scheme at the heart of the government's "points-based" immigration system covers a wider range of jobs, it is bureaucratic and costly to administer. "It costs a lot of money to become a sponsor and to get a visa through: almost every company would need a professional adviser to do it. It's incredibly difficult," said Neil Carberry, chief executive of the Recruitment and Employment Confederation.

The chief executive of the British Meat Processors Association, Nick Allen, said it was costing £12,000 a worker, in visa costs, transport and accommodation, to bring in butchers from the Philippines to fill jobs formerly done by EU workers. "I don't think anyone believes we'll ever be able to fill all those roles with British-sourced labour," said Allen, whose industry relied on 65% non-UK staff before Brexit.

Bringing in low-skilled workers from overseas has become all but impossible. Kate Nicholls, chief executive of UK Hospitality, said: "That's where we've got the most difficulties – you can recruit an executive chef but if you don't have a kitchen porter, the kitchen can't open. If you don't have housekeeping, the hotels can't open: those basic skills are needed."

Ministers have encouraged firms to look closer to home for staff.

While many big businesses have become accustomed to surmounting the new trade barriers to the EU, small exporters describe being buffeted by inconsistent customs and VAT processes. "It really annoys companies, having to go through these extra costs," said William Bain, head of trade policy at the British Chambers of Commerce. He called on the government to resolve the impasse over the Northern Ireland protocol to smooth the way to a better working relationship on other issues.

A government spokesperson said England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland "are all receiving at least as much as they did before" from the new UK shared prosperity fund "while also being free from bureaucratic EU processes and having greater say in how the money is used". A Defra spokesperson said it was committed to maintaining the annual farming budget to the same level as the EU, with reductions in farm subsidies in England being reinvested into the sector.

Crime

Police call for witnesses to Elle Edwards murder

People have been told they will be complicit in the "horrendous and abhorrent" killing of Elle Edwards if they fail to share what they know about the deadly shooting on Christmas Eve.

Edwards, 26, was with friends at a pub in Wallasey, Merseyside, when a gunman opened fire just before midnight on Saturday.

Police said Edwards was an innocent bystander in the attack, which also left a 28-year-old man fighting for his life and three others hurt.

Detectives are questioning a 30-year-old man from Tranmere who was arrested on Monday on suspicion of murder, and a 19-year-old woman from Rock Ferry who is being held on suspicion of conspiracy to murder.

Serena Kennedy, the chief constable of Merseyside police, yesterday said the force would be "relentless" in its pursuit of the "callous and cold-blooded" killer.

Tributes have flooded in for Edwards, who was described as "the most beautiful angel" by former colleagues at the beauty salon where she worked.
Josh Halliday

Nature

Hardy Tree falls after weakening by storm

The Hardy Tree, named after the writer who stacked gravestones around the ash's base during the 1860s, has fallen down.

The tree, which stood in the Old St Pancras churchyard in London, was surrounded by dozens of headstones placed at its base while engineering works were being carried out on a railway line. It became a prominent image of life among death. Thomas Hardy, not yet the celebrated writer, was employed as a young architect in Covent Garden, London.

His firm got the commission from the Bishop of London to disinter a large number of graves from Old St Pancras cemetery, to make room for the Midland Railway to thunder into the King's Cross-St Pancras station complex and it needed the consecrated earth for its rails.

In July, the Camden New Journal reported that the local council had warned the tree was likely to fall, having been weakened by a storm. "We are looking at ways to commemorate this tree, and its story, when it does eventually fall." **John Sutherland and Kevin Rawlinson**





▲ *The uprooted Hardy Tree pictured yesterday. The headstones around its base, right, were arranged by the writer Thomas Hardy*
MAIN PHOTOGRAPH: SIMON LAMROCK

Race

Cost of living crisis hits black households more

Black households are five times more likely to struggle to pay energy bills, according to research.

Black and minority ethnic people were already 2.5 times more likely to be in relative poverty, and 2.2 times more likely to live in deep poverty (defined as someone having an income more than 50% below the relative poverty line), than their white counterparts regardless of the energy crisis, figures from the Office for National Statistics reveal.

Labour analysis has revealed black households are also four times more likely to be behind on rent or mortgage payments than white adults.

The cost of living crisis has disproportionately affected low-income households who often spend a larger share of their income on fuel and food. As inflation reached a 41-year high of 11.1% in October, after Liz Truss's mini-budget, the average household income post-tax fell by 4.3%, the largest fall on record.

Labour has said that the structural barriers faced by BAME groups leave them at greater risk to the cost of living crisis. **Aletha Adu**





◀ Boris Johnson and staff pictured with wine (and cheese) in the 10 Downing Street garden in May 2020

Brexit and political turmoil have tested democracy, says Hoyle

Rowena Mason
Whitehall editor

People's respect for democracy has struggled in the aftermath of Brexit and throughout the year of political turmoil that saw the UK governed by three prime ministers, Lindsay Hoyle, the Speaker of the House of Commons, has said.

Hoyle, the Labour MP who keeps order in the Commons, said Westminster had "never seen anything like it before" with the "disaster" of three prime ministers within three months.

He said parliament had shown itself at its best in 2022 in its response to the death of the Queen, which had been "very, very moving". But Hoyle said people were disappointed with what went on in politics and that it left people "wondering what was happening to our democracy".

In an interview with the BBC's PM programme, he said: "People became very, and were, disgruntled… Brexit divided the country, divided families and people's respect for a democracy has struggled. And, of course, we didn't help this year with what went on."

He said the situation of three prime ministers within three months had been a "disaster" and described the experience of a "bizarre" revolving door of ministers in the Commons, saying "we never knew who was going to be at the despatch box".

"The only thing that was the continuity of parliament was myself. You know, we were running out of ministers, you couldn't believe I've never seen anything like it. When you talk to historians [and] you talk to senior politicians, nobody has ever seen anything like it before," Hoyle said.

With trust in politics eroded by the scandals of the Boris Johnson era and Partygate, Rishi Sunak has promised as prime minister to bring in a new era of accountability in politics. He appointed a new adviser on ministerial interests, Sir Laurie Magnus, just before Christmas.

However, Lord Pickles, a Conservative former cabinet minister and chair of the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments (Acoba), said yesterday the government needed to go further in tightening up the system that monitors ministers, special advisers and senior civil servants picking up lucrative private sector jobs straight after leaving office.

> **'People became very disgruntled and Brexit divided the country and families'**
>
> **Lindsay Hoyle**
> *Speaker*

More than a year ago, Pickles proposed reforming the system with ministers and senior civil servants giving clearer reasoning for why it is appropriate for them to take on any proposed new appointments. He also suggested Acoba should be able to refer any former minister to the government for flouting of its advice - such as lobbying bans - and that this should be taken into account during the honours vetting process.

However, the government has taken no action to improve the workings of Acoba since then.

Pickles wrote in the Telegraph on Christmas Day that Acoba is "essentially toothless" and can be ignored by the "thick-skinned". He suggested that ministers should be banned for up to two years from taking roles in the sector they handled while on the front bench.

The former cabinet minister told the BBC's World at One yesterday that a new system would not need legislation and could be in place within six months.

Gove announces £1.4bn plan for devolution in north-east England

Rowena Mason

A new £1.4bn devolution deal for the north-east of England would bring seven local authority areas under the control of an elected mayor in 2024, Michael Gove has announced.

The levelling-up secretary set out the £48m-a-year deal for Northumberland, Durham, Newcastle, South Tyneside, North Tyneside, Gateshead and Sunderland, after months of negotiations over the new devolved area covering 2 million people.

Council leaders agreed the deal with the Department of Levelling Up after Durham made a late bid to be included this autumn.

It is the sixth such deal to be struck this year - including York and North Yorkshire, the East Midlands, Cornwall, Norfolk, and Suffolk - with Tory ministers attempting to sign off agreements to help with their commitment to levelling up.

The agenda was begun by Boris Johnson as he sought to keep hold of seats in so-called red wall areas where the Conservatives took seats off Labour in the 2019 general election.

However, critics say not much progress has been made towards levelling up across the country since then, with regional divides getting worse.

The deal for the north-east will involve new funding of around £48m a year over a 30-year period - plus a £563m transport budget and a substantial budget for adult education and skills. The new North East Combined authority will also have powers over housing to build affordable homes on brownfield sites and a new mayor will be elected in 2024 if approved following a local consultation.

Gove said he was "proud to have agreed a historic new devolution deal with the north-east that gives local leaders more power, more money, and an even greater say on how their areas are run".

"Devolution is all about letting leaders who live and breathe the region decide what is in their best interests, for their people and for their businesses," he added.

Labour had 'oven-ready' plans in case of Johnson snap election

Aletha Adu

Labour drew up plans in preparation for government in case of a snap election while Boris Johnson struggled to thwart a mutiny from his own MPs during the summer, party insiders have revealed.

The "oven ready" policies were a mixture of fresh commitments from Keir Starmer and ideas from the era of his predecessor, Jeremy Corbyn. Sources said it was hoped it would appeal to the broadest voter base possible - and make Labour "the political wing of the British people".

The manifesto was prepared before the conclusion of the summer Conservative leadership contest, so Labour could be prepared once a new prime minister was selected.

An insider recalled the previous disappointment in Corbyn's office as Labour officials were hurriedly putting ideas together in the lead up to the 2017 election. "We didn't want a repeat of era where we were scraping policy ideas together across departments. We were so stressed and unprepared," a senior Labour insider said. Labour had accused Johnson's government of "running scared" after No 10 blocked the party's attempts to force a July election.

There were also rumours that the new prime minister could call a snap election but Liz Truss ruled this out once she narrowly defeated Rishi Sunak and obtained the keys to No 10 in September.

Before a snap election appeared to be a possibility, Starmer said he had put Corbyn's 2017 manifesto "to one side", in preparation for the election expected to be held in 2024.

Speaking at an event organised by the New Statesman magazine earlier this year, he said: "What we've done with the last manifesto is put it to one side. We're starting from scratch. The slate is wiped clean."

He has also insisted that he has consciously dropped a number of his leadership promises because the country's "financial situation has changed".

Despite this, he has been accused of still being reliant on some of his predecessor's manifesto ideas. A source from the Corbyn-supporting Momentum Labour group, said: "The ghost of Corbyn's past is haunting Keir Starmer. As much as Starmer attacks the left, it's no surprise that Labour's most popular policy announcements, like rail nationalisation, draw from our programme.

"Reheated Blairism may please the Westminster bubble, but it offers no path to rebuilding a broken Britain. Starmer could learn from Scrooge, repent before it's too late and embrace the Left as a partner instead of attacking us. At this point, it would be a Christmas miracle."

Obituaries January-April 2022

▼ Bamber Gascoigne

Writer and broadcaster, died 8 February, aged 87

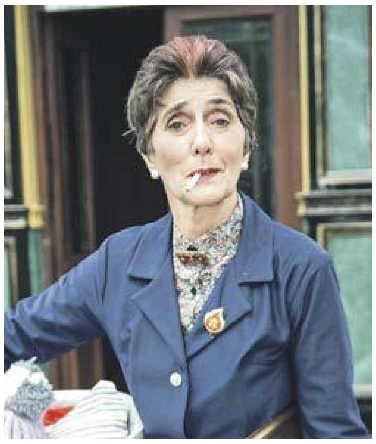
If the polymathic Bamber Gascoigne was ever irked by the fact that he was best known to the British public for the phrase: "Fingers on buzzers … your starter for 10," he never showed it. More than 30 years after his retirement as the quizmaster on University Challenge - a post he had held for a quarter of a century between 1962 and 1987 - the phrase still dogged his footsteps, despite everything else he did.

With his easy patrician manner, he proved an inspired if incongruous choice to chair a television quiz show on a commercial channel, even in the early 1960s. He looked and spoke like a junior don, gradually evolving into an uncensorious professor. He did not mind being parodied by Griff Rhys Jones in the anarchic 80s Young Ones comedy series.

The show required only 40 days a year of Gascoigne's time. That meant he could indulge his wide-ranging other interests, including opera, theatre and the arts, along with a number of serious historical studies. For television Gascoigne wrote and presented documentaries including The Christians (1977), Victorian Values (1987) and The Great Moghuls (1990). There were also novels, potboilers and short histories.

Stephen Bates





'A nation hung on her every word'

▲ June Brown

Actor, died 3 April, aged 95

Among all the outstanding actors who have appeared in the BBC's television soap EastEnders over the years, none lasted longer, nor retained such huge popular affection, as June Brown.

In the role of Dot Cotton, the chainsmoking, hypochondriac launderette manager of Albert Square, Brown created a great Dickensian character of detail, humanity and colour that enrolled her in the long-running soap's female pantheon.

As Dot, she gossiped for Britain, battled heroically with a wayward son, lost her job, helped her best friend to a comfortable death, married and lost a husband, and maintained a running sparring match with Leonard Fenton's kind GP, Doctor Legg. She often came out with the unexpected, and a nation hung on every word, inhaled every puff, as she gallivanted spikily among her neighbours. Only an actor of vast experience, in life and in show business, could possibly have sustained such a role, and Brown qualified gloriously on both counts.

Michael Coveney

▼ Shane Warne

Cricketer, died 4 March, aged 52

Shane Warne was almost certainly the greatest spin bowler cricket has ever produced. More than that, he was one of the most outsize personalities of any sport. Everything he did in his game and his life was on a grand scale: he lived fast and, it transpires, died young.

Warne singlehandedly revived the discipline of leg-spin, which by the time he burst into Test cricket in the 1990s was almost a lost art. He was still in the business of terrorising Englishmen when he retired from Test cricket 14 years later.

Warne was always an Australian archetype - the lovable larrikin who disobeys the rules but triumphs. He was not just a master of his craft; he commanded the arena. He made that clear from the first ball he bowled in an Ashes Test, to Mike Gatting at Old Trafford: "Two-thirds of the way down the pitch the ball dipped into the leg-side, opening Gatting up like a can of beans, before ripping diagonally across his body to clip the outside of off-stump," wrote Mike Selvey in the Guardian. "Gatting stood his ground, not in dissent or disappointment but in total, utter disbelief."

At the time some called it the Ball from Hell. As time went by it was sanctified as the Ball of the Century.

Matthew Engel





PHOTOGRAPH: RONALD GRANT

'Dazzlingly handsome'

▲ Sidney Poitier

Actor, died 6 January, aged 94

Sidney Poitier was the first black actor to win an Oscar in a leading role, in 1964, for his performance in Lilies of the Field. This simple story was enhanced by its star's humour and vitality. It led to a string of successes - To Sir, With Love, In the Heat of the Night and Guess Who's Coming to Dinner (all 1967) - which made Poitier a box-office star. But Poitier's greatest achievement - alongside his friend and occasional rival Harry Belafonte - was to help alter the racial perceptions that dominated not just Hollywood, but society in general.

His success came against seemingly insurmountable odds. Born into extreme poverty in Miami to Bahamian parents, Poitier spent his early childhood in Cat Island, before being sent to New York. In an attempt to escape washing dishes for a living, he attended an audition at the American Negro Theater in Harlem where - virtually unable to read - he was rejected largely because of a strong Bahamian accent. He changed his speech so dramatically that the group accepted him, and the tall, athletic and dazzlingly handsome Poitier was cast in an all-black production of Lysistrata in 1946. A turning point came when he was given a role in Blackboard Jungle (1955). As a mixed-up kid in a mixed-race school, he was at last in a hit movie.

In the Defiant Ones (1958), Poitier shared top billing with his co-star, Tony Curtis - a breakthrough for the period. He and Curtis gained Oscar nominations for their roles as antipathetic convicts on the run.

Brian Baxter

'Rock'n'roll as gothic movie'

▶ Meat Loaf

Singer and actor, died 20 January, aged 74

If all he had ever done was record the album Bat Out of Hell, Meat Loaf would still be guaranteed his own plinth in the museum of rock'n'roll. Released in Britain in early 1978, the album might have been conceived as the antidote to punk rock, which had been wreaking havoc on the music industry. The unlikely-looking figure of Meat Loaf stood at the centre of a bombastic maelstrom of sound, an operatic blend of heavy rock, fantasy lyrics, a choir of backing vocalists and long, multipart songs. It was rock'n'roll redesigned as gothic movie and Broadway spectacle.

Meat Loaf had met the songwriter Jim Steinman, his collaborator on Bat Out of Hell, when he auditioned successfully for Steinman's musical More Than You Deserve in New York



in 1973. Sales of the record got off to a slow start but the album turned into a slow-burning phenomenon, becoming an almost permanent fixture on charts around the world on its way to selling 43m copies. In Britain, it has spent more than 500 weeks on the album chart.

The record's vast success was not all plain sailing for Meat Loaf. He and Steinman formed the Neverland Express band to play the material on tour, but in Canada he broke a leg when he fell off the stage. Depressed and unable to perform, he suffered a nervous breakdown and started using cocaine. "I was an angry, violent guy who was out of control," he later admitted. "I didn't know how to deal with being popular."

Adam Sweeting

▼ Madeleine Albright

Diplomat and political adviser, died 23 March, aged 84

Madeleine Albright was the first woman to hold the office of secretary of state of the United States. It fell to her to cope with the painful dilemmas presented for the US by the breakup of Yugoslavia and the rise of Islamic opposition in the Middle East. However, she could not take the place that office usually confers in succession to the president because she was not a "natural born citizen" of the US; she had been a refugee from Europe.

Albright, with her considerable expertise in both domestic and international politics, and her



ability to speak several languages, was a natural choice for Clinton, when he was elected in 1992, to choose as US ambassador at the UN. There she demonstrated charm and competence, occasionally tarnished by a certain proneness to accident. She miscalculated badly when she advised that Slobodan Milošević, the Serbian nationalist leader, would cave in after brief bombing during the Kosovo crisis.

More seriously, when asked on NBC television about the alleged death of half a million children as a result of sanctions imposed on Iraq, Albright responded: "We think the price is worth it." The remark portrayed her as hardbitten, which was far from the case. The sanctions policy had been in place long before the Clinton administration, but the comment was not forgotten.

It is said that Clinton asked Albright if she was happy as ambassador; she replied that she was, but that she would rather be secretary of state. Clinton appointed her in 1997, at the beginning of his second term.

Godfrey Hodgson



▲ Jana Bennett

Media executive, died 11 January, aged 66

Jana Bennett was the first woman appointed as director of television at the BBC, and its first director of vision, with responsibility for the corporation's entire output, across TV, online content and interactive technology. Her transformative impact on television affected not just what we watch but how we watch it. She oversaw the launch of BBC Three, BBC Four, CBeebies and CBBC as well as iPlayer.

Despite her position as one of the BBC's most senior executives, Jana was not a "suit". She was a self-effacing creative enabler who positively encouraged diversity of



▲ Shirley Hughes
Author and illustrator, died 25 February, aged 94

Shirley Hughes was an award-winning author of more than 50 children's books, and illustrator of some 200 more, with worldwide sales of more than 11m. Through her warm-hearted observation, particularly of pre-school children, she created a distinctive and affectionate image of childhood.

Her engaging characters have immediacy and vigour that come from her skilful illustrations, using pen and ink, watercolour and gouache. She kept them up to date by being a passionate user of a sketchbook in which she made quick drawings – "almost at the speed of seeing" – capturing children and settings for her stories. She could create a sense of drama out of the smallest thing and resolve it without needing to deliver a message. Instead, she relied on children and their parents being able to solve problems for themselves.

In 1977 she published one of her best-loved books, Dogger, and the first to bring her a mass readership, about a small boy called Dave whose battered toy dog gets lost on the trip to pick up his sister, Bella, from school. In Alfie Gets in First (1981), the first of her celebrated Alfie series, the eponymous hero runs to be home first from a shopping trip and slams the door shut, inadvertently locking everyone else outside. There is no moralising about an unruly child or a careless mother: instead, Alfie works out a way to unlock the door and all is well again.

Julia Eccleshare



▲ Peter Bowles
Actor, died 17 March, aged 85

Bounder, criminal, villain. Dandy, duke or diplomat. Peter Bowles could be all of these incarnations and often two or three of them at once. Always highly regarded, Bowles himself ruefully admitted that he wasn't a "star" until, aged 43, he played Richard DeVere, the former costermonger turned supermarket tycoon, in the BBC's hit comedy series To the Manor Born (1979-81), in which he contested the affections, and the superior social status, of Penelope Keith's not so merry widow Audrey fforbes-Hamilton. Thereafter, he initiated a string of TV serials including Only When I Laugh (1979-82), in which he starred with James Bolam and Christopher Strauli as one of three troublesome hospital patients, and Perfect Scoundrels (1990-92), with Bowles and Bryan Murray playing latter-day Robin Hoods.

The phenomenon of a cultured cad was nothing new. But Bowles could suggest complications beyond the superficially suave. He often paraded his charm as a veil for true menace, as well as spivvery.

In 1992 Bowles bumped into the director Peter Hall, who invited him to join a 1993 revival of Terence Rattigan's Separate Tables. His double of a wrecked newspaper columnist in one play and furtive groper in the other attracted huge critical praise and heralded nine seasons of outstanding work with Hall's company.

Michael Coveney

'A whiff of sex and danger'

▼ Ronnie Spector
Singer, died 12 January, aged 78

The combination of the voice of Veronica Bennett and Phil Spector's Wall of Sound became one of the most potent and distinctive sounds to emerge from the world of pop music in the early 1960s. Ronnie Spector, as she became when she and the producer married, was the lead singer of the Ronettes, a New York trio whose hits included Be My Baby, Baby I Love You, (The Best Part of) Breakin' Up and – her own favourite – Walking in the Rain.

With their towering black beehive hairdos, extravagant eye makeup and tight sheath dresses, the Ronettes brought a whiff of sex and danger to the wholesome girl-group genre. The Wagnerian scale of Spector's orchestral arrangements often threatened to overwhelm his singers, but in Ronnie he found the perfect figure to stand atop his mountainous soundscapes.

Her voice, marked by a slow, wide vibrato, combined the sweet optimism of adolescence with a sultry undertone that hinted at a more knowing sophistication.

Richard Williams



thought and other people's ideas. She said: "There may be a desire to own everything, but you must not stop the bus and stand in the way of a good idea … The ecology is less rich if you shape everything in your own image." It was this approach that led to so many successful programmes during her nine years at the helm of BBC Television, ranging from The Thick of It and Planet Earth to Strictly Come Dancing and Sherlock.

Jana joined the BBC in 1979 as a news trainee, and leap-frogged her way up the ladder to become an editor on Newsnight at 27. She quickly rose to become the first female editor of Horizon in 1990 then the first female head of BBC Science in 1994. There, she drove the reinvention of science output with series such as Walking with Dinosaurs and The Human Body drawing big audiences to the genre.

In the US, Jana introduced successful formats such as Changing Rooms and What Not to Wear on cable channels before returning in 2002 to take the role of BBC director of television.

Lorraine Heggessey

'A slow traversal of a landscape'

▼ Sir Harrison Birtwistle
Composer, died 18 April, aged 87

Harrison Birtwistle was that surprising thing, a deeply English composer who was also internationally renowned as a great modernist. His modernism was of a very particular kind, rooted in the primordial formal elements of music and ritualised theatrical gesture. This gives it an air of being simultaneously modern and ancient. Like that of so many English composers before him, Birtwistle's music often feels like a slow traversal of a landscape – often a specifically English landscape.



The pieces often begin by setting out a set of premises of the simplest kind – a pulse, a single pitch, a small circling figure. From this something hugely complex grows, with an inevitability easy to feel but hard to analyse. Things unfold with patient slowness, like a river flowing, or the growth of a glacier.

If there was a moment when Birtwistle's vision crystallised, it was surely the day in August 1965 when his Tragoedia, for 10 instruments, was premiered. It is said that at the end Birtwistle jumped up and punched the air in triumph. And rightly so, because Tragoedia was an astounding achievement.

And if one had to name the key date in the emergence of Birtwistle's "new" style it would be the 1986 premiere of his opera The Mask of Orpheus at English National Opera, described to me by Birtwistle as "perhaps the most complex work of art ever made".

Ivan Hewett



▲ Jamal Edwards, died 20 February, aged 31
Music and media entrepreneur who helped launch Emeli Sandé and Jessie J.

Bill Bryden, died 5 January, aged 79
Theatre director at the Royal Court and the National.

Peter Bogdanovich, died 6 January, aged 82
Director of The Last Picture Show, What's Up, Doc?, and Paper Moon.

Jack Dromey, died 7 January, aged 73
Labour politician and trade unionist.

André Leon Talley, died 18 January, aged 73
Fashion journalist, creative force and editor-at-large of US Vogue.



▲ Norma Waterson, died 30 January, aged 82
Celebrated singer of traditional English folk music.

Barry Cryer, died 25 January, aged 86
Writer, comedian and popular panellist on BBC Radio 4's I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue.

Elza Soares, died 20 January, aged 91
Brazilian singer and exponent of samba.

Thierry Mugler, died 23 January, aged 73
French fashion designer loved by celebrities such as Madonna and Lady Gaga.



▲ Monica Vitti, died 2 February, aged 90
Actor and star of Michelangelo Antonioni's films in the 1960s.

Lata Mangeshkar, died 6 February, aged 92
Indian playback singer hailed as 'the nightingale of Bollywood'.

Douglas Trumbull, died 7 February, aged 79
Visual effects artist known for 2001: A Space Odyssey.

Betty Davis, died 9 February, aged 77
American funk singer and model.

Carmen Herrera, died 12 February, aged 106
Cuban-American painter and sculptor of geometric abstraction.

Val Robinson, died 13 February, aged 80
Hockey player who appeared 149 times for England.

Jan Pieńkowski, died 19 February, aged 85
Illustrator and creator of the Meg and Mog children's books.

David Banks, died 22 February, aged 74
Journalist and editor of the Daily Mirror.

Mark Lanegan, died 22 February, aged 57
US indie rock singer with Screaming Trees and Queens of the Stone Age.

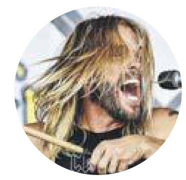
Josephine Veasey, died 22 February, aged 91
Mezzo-soprano famed for her performances at Covent Garden.

Grenville Davey, died 28 February, aged 60
Turner prize-winning sculptor of the YBA generation.

Lynda Baron, died 5 March, aged 82
Actor who played Nurse Gladys Emmanuel in Open All Hours.

William Hurt, died 13 March, aged 71
American stage and screen star, of Children of a Lesser God.

Lady Howe of Idlicote, died 22 March, aged 90
Public servant and one of the first 'people's peers'.



▲ Taylor Hawkins, died 25 March, aged 50
Drummer, singer and songwriter with Foo Fighters.

Doris Derby, died 28 March, aged 82
American photographer who chronicled the civil rights movement.

Tom Parker, died 30 March, aged 33
Singer of the Wanted and campaigner for cancer research.

David McKee, died 6 April, aged 87
Author and illustrator of children's series Elmer and Mr Benn.

Jack Higgins, died 9 April, aged 92
Bestselling author of The Eagle Has Landed.



◀ Maria Ewing, died 9 January, aged 71
American opera singer with a mesmerising stage presence and richly textured voice.



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Jamie Oliver urges government to expand free school meals

Rowena Mason
Whitehall editor

Jamie Oliver has renewed pressure on the government to expand free school meals, with George Osborne suggesting widening the programme could be the right way forward and Tony Blair saying the money could be found if politicians wanted to do it.

The television chef highlighted the problem as he was guest-editing BBC Radio 4's Today programme yesterday as part of his long-term campaign on free school meals. Speaking on the programme, Osborne, a Conservative former chancellor, criticised the current "Tory dance" on the problem.

While stopping short of supporting Oliver's campaign, he said: "The overall objective, which is having better fed, healthier kids, is a good one I certainly support and it may well be, in my mind - I'm not active in politics today - that providing for better free school meals for a much larger group of the population is the right way forward."

Referring to the footballer Marcus Rashford's successful campaign to get free school meals extended to the holidays during the Covid pandemic, Osborne added: "Certainly I think the current kind of Tory dance of like, 'No, no, no', and then footballer jumps up and says, 'Yes', and they go, 'All right', is not a good one politically for my party."

He also suggested the government needed to do more to tackle obesity with an expansion of sugar taxes. Asked what approach he would take if he was still in government, he said: "I would extend the sugar levy to non-sugary products. And I would actually go ahead with that ban on advertising because I think that's been well-versed now for many years and I think would be a good thing."

Children of parents who are on universal credit and have an annual income of no more than £7,400, or are on another benefit such as jobseeker's allowance, are eligible for free school meals.

There is also still controversy over free school meals during the holidays. In 2020, Rashford called for the government to extend its £15 free school meal vouchers - initially set up to feed children in term time when schools were closed by the pandemic - into the holidays. Boris Johnson, and his then chancellor, Rishi Sunak, dug their heels in and refused, only to be forced into a humiliating U-turn each time, after waves of criticism. However, since then, councils across England have been quietly axing holiday food voucher schemes.

> *'Better school meals for a larger group of the population is the right way forward'*
>
> **George Osborne**
> *Former chancellor*

Blair said it was possible to find the money for free school meals and people would accept that investment in children's future was critical. The former Labour prime minister said it was important "particularly today, when the pressures on families are enormous, and when there are levels of poverty that we really haven't seen in the country for a long period of time.

"For the sums of money you're going to spend on this early years, if you really have the will to do it, I promise you having been in government, you could find the money necessary to do this," Blair added.

A Department for Education spokesperson said: "We are supporting more children and young people than ever before. Over a third of pupils in England receive free school meals in education settings and we have just announced a further investment in the national school breakfast programme, extending the programme for another year."



Life's a beach
A pair of surfers in Polzeath, Cornwall, yesterday make the most of the sea during the festive period.

PHOTOGRAPH: SIMON MAYCOCK/ALAMY

Twitter account of Piers Morgan 'wiped' in attack by hackers

Kevin Rawlinson and agency

Piers Morgan's Twitter account has been wiped of much of its content, amid reports that it was hacked.

The former Good Morning Britain (GMB) presenter, 57, who has 8.3 million followers on the social media site, had no profile picture, banner image or posts yesterday afternoon. Some tweets containing still and video images remained, as did records of tweets his account had liked.

According to reports, his account shared posts the previous night containing false information, racial slurs and abusive messages directed at the late Queen Elizabeth II and the singer Ed Sheeran.

It comes after the account of the education secretary, Gillian Keegan, appeared to be hacked on Christmas Day. Her account replied to several tweets with links to websites advertising cryptocurrencies such as bitcoin. The tweets on Keegan's account began appearing shortly before 7.30pm on Christmas Day and were sent throughout the evening into the early hours on Boxing Day.

Last month the Commons speaker, Sir Lindsay Hoyle, wrote to MPs advising them to increase security on their mobile phones with multi-factor verification, as well as update software and delete old messages.

The warning came after Liz Truss's phone was reportedly hacked by Russian agents in the summer when she was foreign secretary and frontrunner in the Tory leadership race.

The presenter, who recently joined TalkTV as the host of its Uncensored show after quitting GMB, has not publicly addressed the apparent hack.

Earlier this month, the Metropolitan police said no further action would be taken against a man suspected of sending death threats to Morgan and his family online.

Representatives of Morgan, TalkTV and Twitter have been contacted for comment.

Hill walkers warned: don't rely on phones - take maps and a compass

Miranda Bryant

Walkers in Britain have been warned not to rely on smartphones to find their way around hills and mountains, and instead learn to use a map and compass, amid an increase in calls to rescue services.

On Christmas Day a walker became unwell and later died after getting into difficulty at Buckstones Jump, near Rydal, in the Lake District.

Up until Boxing Day morning rescue teams in the Lake District had attended 606 callouts in 2022, a figure they expected to rise to 620 by the end of the year. Numbers have risen significantly in the last 10 years, up from 432 incidents in 2012. Last year was their busiest year to date with 681 callouts.

As more people explore the outdoors - many for the first time - experts urged everyone to understand how to use a map and compass as well as carry a torch and mobile battery backup on outings.

The Lake District Search and Mountain Rescue Association (LDSAMRA) said one in four callouts it received were "avoidable rescues" due to people getting lost or delayed through not having the necessary navigational skills.

Richard Warren, chair of the LDSAMRA, said smartphones were a great resource for walkers and climbers but that variable phone signals and battery power, which drained rapidly in cold weather, could present problems if people relied on the handsets entirely. "What we're trying to avoid is people just relying on their mobile phones, and getting them to learn to use a map and compass."

Mountain rescue teams, he said, were volunteers, unpaid and on call throughout the year, including over Christmas.

Paul Donovan, co-project lead of the safety campaign AdventureSmart UK, said while it was "fantastic" that more people were out walking and engaging with nature, there was a national rise in incidents. "If they are reliant on their smartphone without any backup, there's a chance of something happening as a result."

There was nothing wrong with using Google Maps or OS maps, he added but he advised walkers and climbers to carry a battery backup and learn to use a map and compass.

He said: "It's something that's been more obvious to us over the last 12 to 18 months as more are venturing into hills, and Covid has changed the demographic of people venturing into hills and outdoors."

Before heading out, he urged people to ask themselves three questions: Do I have the right gear? Do I know what the weather will be like? Am I confident I have the knowledge and skills for the day?


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Train passengers left stranded at stations in post-Christmas chaos

Josh Halliday
North of England correspondent

Crowds of people were left waiting at railway stations amid chaotic scenes yesterday as Britain's struggling rail network stuttered back to life after Christmas.

Hundreds of passengers faced long queues at major stations while others faced lengthy delays due to overrunning engineering work.

One traveller spoke of "chaotic" scenes and another described fights breaking out as "masses" of people waited in the cold for rail replacement buses for Avanti West Coast services between Manchester and London.

Arrivals at Gatwick airport also described waiting for hours, after trains did not start running until just before midday yesterday, despite the latest RMT union strike ending at 6am. Network Rail warned passengers only to travel if absolutely necessary for the next two weeks, when services are expected to be "significantly disrupted" due to a fresh round of industrial action.

Trains are expected to be much busier than usual in the run-up to New Year's Day, before a week of nationwide strikes by members of the RMT and Aslef unions from 3 January.

One passenger, travelling from Manchester to London for work, described how crowds of people were crammed into a narrow tunnel at Rugby station as they waited for rail replacement buses to Milton Keynes.

She said there were "so many people on the platform and in the underpass that people had to squeeze past if they were heading in the opposite direction" and that they were funnelled into a "narrow tunnel and it stopped moving as people reached the barriers".

The passenger, who did not want to be named, said she waited for more than an hour for a bus but that it was "so badly organised" and "chaotic" as there was no communication from staff and fellow travellers tried to push in the queue.



▲ *Travellers on the concourse at King's Cross, London, yesterday*
PHOTOGRAPH: HENRY NICHOLLS/REUTERS

> ***'The queue for the first train out of Gatwick stretches across the airport'***
>
> **Betty Valentine**
> *Author*

At Gatwick airport, travellers reported waiting for hours for a coach or hire car as late-running engineering work meant there were no services before 11.52am.

Betty Valentine, an author who was hoping to get on the first train, posted photos of a long queue and warned of a possible crush when the barriers open. "The queue for the first train out of Gatwick stretches across the airport – if someone isn't careful people are going to get seriously hurt in the crush when the barrier goes down," she wrote on Twitter.

Network Rail, which manages Britain's railways on behalf of the UK government, has warned passengers to expect serious disruption into the new year, and urged those on some routes to avoid travel unless necessary until at least 9 January.

It said: "Rail passengers who use the west coast mainline from London Euston to Carlisle and rail routes in the West Midlands, [the north-west], Merseyside and Cumbria are being advised to only travel by train if absolutely necessary between 24 December and 8 January."

CrossCountry, which runs services between Penzance and Aberdeen, told its passengers to expect severe disruption until at least 7 January owing to industrial action.

Members of the TSSA union at CrossCountry began a 24-hour strike at 9pm on Boxing Day as part of a long-running campaign for a guarantee of no compulsory redundancies, no unagreed changes to terms and conditions, and a pay increase that addresses the rising cost of living.

TSSA members work in roles in customer service management, driver management, training, control, customer communications, safety, timetabling and planning.

Managers are based at stations including Edinburgh, Newcastle, Birmingham, Manchester, Bristol, Bournemouth and Plymouth.



Leerto, 21, with her one-year-old son at the ICU wing of the stabilisation centre, which is located in Bay Regional Hospital in Baidoa, central Somalia

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World

Chinese rush for flights as zero-Covid restrictions end and infections start to rise

Timmy Shen
Taipei

Chinese people have rushed to book overseas travel as authorities scrapped the last major plank of the country's "zero-Covid" policy despite reports of hospitals being overwhelmed nationwide.

On Monday, health authorities announced that inbound travellers will no longer have to go into quarantine, then yesterday the immigration authority said it would resume issuing visas for mainland residents to travel overseas from 8 January.

China has been rapidly reversing the strict Covid curbs in place since early 2020 following protests that broke out in November in the Chinese mainland's biggest show of public discontent since President Xi Jinping took power in 2012.

His subsequent abrupt U-turn on the curbs, which have battered the economy, means the virus is now spreading largely unchecked across the country of 1.4 billion people.

The National Health Commission announced over the weekend that it had stopped publishing daily Covid data, and official statistics showed only one Covid death in the seven days to Monday, fuelling doubts among health experts and residents about the government's data. The numbers are inconsistent with the experience of much less populous countries after they re-opened.

Reports suggest hospitals across the country have become overwhelmed with patients and that the virus is also spreading rapidly through frontline medical workers.

Yesterday, doctors told Reuters that the hospitals where they worked had been overwhelmed with five or six times more patients than usual, most of them elderly.

In a sign that the death toll from Covid is also rising, local media reported that Peking University and Tsinghua University have posted a growing number of obituary notices of mostly older staff and faculty members over the past month.

The quick-fire decision by the world's second-largest economy to open its borders, coupled with a lack of data transparency, has worried some of China's neighbours.

Japan's prime minister, Fumio Kishida, said yesterday that his country will be requiring Covid tests for all visitors from China as a temporary emergency measure from Friday.

Those who test positive will have to quarantine for seven days at designated facilities and their samples will be used for genome analysis.

"There are growing worries in Japan," Kishida said. "We have decided to take a temporary special measure to respond to the situation."

Kishida said a lack of information and transparency from China was making it difficult to come up with safety measures. There are huge discrepancies between information from central and local authorities, and between the government and private organisations, he said.

254%
The jump in outbound flight bookings in China yesterday compared with the day before

Data from the Chinese travel platform Ctrip showed that searches for popular cross-border destinations had increased 10-fold within half an hour of the quarantine news breaking on Monday night. Macau, Hong Kong, Japan, Thailand and South Korea were the most sought-after destinations, according to Ctrip. Data from Trip.com showed outbound flight bookings were up 254% early yesterday from the day before.

While many in China reacted to the relaxation of travel rules with joy, a lot more are scrambling to get hold of medical supplies to fight Covid.

Nurses and doctors have been asked to work while sick and retired medical workers in rural communities were being rehired to help, state media reported.

"Some places are facing great pressure at hospital emergency wards and intensive care units," an NHC official, Jiao Yahui, told reporters.

The country's banking and insurance regulator yesterday said it would ramp up financial support to small and private businesses in the catering and tourism sectors, which were among the hardest-hit industries amid the pandemic.

Additional reporting **Reuters and Agence France-Presse**
Business *Page 23 →*

Taiwan extends conscription in face of growing China threat

Timmy Shen

Taiwan will extend its compulsory military service from four months to one year amid mounting military tensions with China, the island's president announced yesterday.

Under the plans due to come into effect in 2024, conscripts will undergo more intense training and will guard key infrastructure, enabling regular forces to respond more swiftly in the event of any attempt by China to invade. The announcement came after Taiwan's defence ministry reported that 71 Chinese air force jets and drones had entered the island's air defence zone within 24 hours on Monday - the largest reported incursion to date.

"As long as Taiwan is strong enough, it will be the home of democracy and freedom all over the world, and it will not become a battlefield," President Tsai Ing-wen said after a national security council meeting. "Taiwan wants to tell the world that between democracy and dictatorship, we firmly believe in democracy. Between war and peace, we insist on peace. Let us show the courage and determination to protect our homeland and defend democracy."

The defence authority also plans to raise the monthly wage of regular conscription soldiers. Since 2013, Taiwan has required men over 18 to serve four months in the military. The new plan will put mandatory recruits on eight-week basic training.

Chen Chi-mai, mayor of Kaohsiung city and the acting chairperson of the ruling Democratic Progressive party, said yesterday that it was essential to strengthen national security.

Taiwan has been gradually shifting from a conscript military to a volunteer-dominated professional force, but China's growing assertiveness towards the island it claims as its own, as well as Russia's invasion of Ukraine, have prompted debate about how to boost defence.

Tsai said "a few things" had been learned from the Ukraine war which have been incorporated into Taiwan's defence reforms, and noted that Ukraine's ability to hold off much larger Russian forces had given the international community time to render assistance.

Additional reporting **Reuters**



'Blizzard of the century' leaves at least 56 people dead across US, with Buffalo worst affected

Edward Helmore and Victoria Bekiempis *New York*

The death toll in the US city worst-hit by a ferocious winter storm gripping the country rose to 27 yesterday as members of the emergency services charged with the grim task of looking for more victims battled snow drifts and sub-freezing temperatures.

Warmer weather was forecast for Buffalo in New York state in the coming days, but for many residents, immediate relief remained out of sight. State and military police were being sent to enforce driving bans and many grocery shops remained shut.

Mark Poloncarz, the executive of Erie county, which includes Buffalo, said police would be positioned at entrances and at major intersections to enforce a ban on driving in New York's second-most populous city.

"Too many people are ignoring the ban," Poloncarz, a Democrat, said one day after he told CNN that the storm was probably the worst "in our lifetime", even for an area accustomed to high snowfall off the Great Lakes. "We've had so many bodies that various hospitals are full and we're just having to go through and determine if the individuals have died from a blizzard-related death," he added.

The storm raged through the Buffalo area on Friday and Saturday, dropping more than 1.2 metres of snow in some places. The area was expecting a bit more snow yesterday, before projected warmer weather later in the week that raises the the threat of flooding as the snow melts.

Nationwide at least 56 storm-related deaths have been reported, and thousands of flights have been cancelled, as power was knocked out from Maine to Seattle. Among the fatalities in Erie county, three people died in their vehicles, four died

Naked ambitions
Tiny hamlet strips off to fight depopulation
Page 20



Archaeology
'West knows best' era over in Africa
Page 22



▲ *Residents of Buffalo shovel snow after the storm dumped up to four feet of snow on the city* PHOTOGRAPH: FATIH AKTAS/GETTY IMAGES



▲ *People explore the ice covered pier in Port Stanley, Ontario, Canada, created by the 'blizzard of the century'* PHOTOGRAPH: GEOFF ROBINS/GETTY



▼ *Members of the New York National Guard help to free a car stuck in the snow in Buffalo* PHOTOGRAPH: JOED VIERA/AFP/GETTY



◀ *A man in Buffalo attempts to clear his roof of snow* PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN NORMILE/GETTY

without heat in their homes, three died from cardiac events related to shovelling or other snow-clearing and three died after emergency services were delayed in responding to medical calls. "I just have to offer my deepest condolences to those who lost a loved one as a result of this horrible situation," Poloncarz said.

One victim, 22-year-old Anndel Taylor, died after being trapped in her car for 18 hours, exchanging a series of videos with her sisters in North Carolina, the New York Post reported. In the last video, Taylor rolled down one of her windows to show a nearby van that was also trapped. "She was telling my sister she was scared," Tomeshia Brown, one of Taylor's sisters, told WSOC-TV, a North Carolina news outlet.

Tales of frightening hardship were legion. Shahida Muhammad told WKBW an outage knocked out power to her one-year-old son's ventilator. She and the child's father manually administered breaths from Friday to Sunday when rescuers saw her social media posts. Muhammad said her son was doing well despite the ordeal and described him as "a fighter".

Melissa Carrick, a doula, said the blizzard forced her to coach a client through childbirth by phone. An ambulance crew eventually transported the woman to a hospital about 45 minutes south of Buffalo, because no closer hospitals were reachable.

"In any other normal Buffalo storm, I would just go because that's what you do - just drive through the snow," Carrick said. "But you knew this was different."

The Buffalo mayor said a driving ban was still in effect. "You will still get stuck out there," Byron Brown said. "Many streets in the city of Buffalo are still impassable."

The New York governor, Kathy Hochul, said: "This blizzard is one for the ages. Certainly, it's the blizzard of the century." Hochul noted the storm came a little over a month after another "historic" snowfall. Between the two storms, snow totals are not far off the 95.4in (242cm) the area normally sees in an entire winter.

Hochul said the White House had promised to swiftly approve a federal emergency declaration for Erie and Genesee counties, making assistance available to state and local government. Joe Biden said his prayers were with the victims' families. In a joint statement, the two Democratic New York senators, Kirsten Gillibrand and Chuck Schumer, said federal assistance was justified given the "once-in-generation blizzard".

Scientists said climate change may have contributed to the intensity of the storm. That is because the atmosphere can carry more water vapour, which acts as fuel, said Mark Serreze, director of the National Snow and Ice Data Center at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Ashton Robinson Cook, a National Weather Service meteorologist, said the bomb cyclone - when atmospheric pressure drops very quickly in a strong storm - that caused the massive US storm had now weakened. Across the US, 3,410 domestic and international flights were cancelled on Monday, according to the tracking site FlightAware.

In Jackson, Mississippi, crews struggled to get water through the beleaguered water system, authorities said. Many areas had no water or low water pressure. On Christmas Day, residents were told to boil drinking water due to water lines bursting in frigid temperatures.

Tens of thousands of people in Canada remained without electricity yesterday as crews rushed to repair power lines brought down by strong winds. The province of Quebec was one of the hardest-hit, with 33,000 homes left without power. In the west of the country, four people died and dozens more were injured when a passenger bus rolled over on an icy road in an area of British Columbia. Federal police said they suspected "extremely icy road conditions".

> ***'This is one for the ages. Certainly, it's the blizzard of the century'***
>
> **Kathy Hochul**
> *New York governor*

Additional reporting
Associated Press

French open suicide inquiry after Iranian man found dead in river

Agence France-Presse
Lyon

French authorities are investigating as suicide the drowning of an Iranian man in the south-eastern city of Lyon who had said on social media he was going to kill himself to draw attention to the protest crackdown in Iran.

Mohammad Moradi, 38, was found in the Rhone river that flows through the centre of Lyon late on Monday, a police source told AFP. Emergency services intervened but were unable to resuscitate him on the river bank, the source added.

Moradi had posted a video on Instagram saying he was about to drown himself to highlight the crackdown on protesters in Iran since the death in custody of Mahsa Amini, 22, after her arrest in Tehran for an alleged breach of the country's strict dress code for women. "When you see this video, I will be dead," Moradi said, in halting but comprehensible French.

Lyon prosecutors said they had launched an investigation to "verify the theory of suicide, in view in particular of the messages posted by the person concerned on social networks" to take his life.

The incident has shocked the city, where a small rally was held on the banks of the Rhone yesterday. Mourners placed candles and wreaths on the riverside railings. "Mohammad Moradi killed himself to make the voice of revolution heard in Iran," said Timothee Amini of the local Iranian community.

According to some members of the Iranian community, Moradi was a history undergraduate and worked in a restaurant. He lived in Lyon with his wife for three years. "His heart was beating for Iran, he could no longer bear the regime," said Amini.

Protests have gripped Iran for over three months. The Oslo-based group Iran Human Rights (IHR) said yesterday 476 protesters have been killed in the crackdown, with at least 100 Iranians risking execution over the protests, in addition to two young men already executed.

"The police are attacking people, we have lost a lot of sons and daughters, we have to do something," Moradi said. "I decided to commit suicide in the Rhone river. It is a challenge, to show that we, Iranian people, we are very tired of this situation" he added.

Samaritans can be contacted on 116 123, or email jo@samaritans.org or jo@samaritans.ie

Eyewitness



▼ Manila, the Philippines *Catholics attend the blessing of replicas, the start of events for the Feast of the Black Nazarene at Quiapo church. The feast usually ends in a procession on 9 January where millions of barefoot devotees march to see the Black Nazarene but is suspended due to Covid infections*
PHOTOGRAPH: EZRA ACAYAN/GETTY IMAGES



Stripping to save town

Spanish hamlet gives nude calendar a whirl

Ashifa Kassam
Madrid

For decades they've grappled with a steady exodus as residents left for opportunities beyond the southern Spanish hamlet. But the population of Peña Zafra de Abajo may have found a singular strategy to fight back - in essence stripping down to save their town.

"When I suggested the idea of a nude calendar, people said, 'Are you crazy?'" said Lucía Nicolás, who leads the hamlet's residents' association. "But I saw it as a way to put ourselves on the map and show off our hamlet of 16 residents."

> *'We thought we'd end up giving away extras - they're snapped up'*
>
> **Lucía Nicolás**
> *Residents' association*

Slowly the divisive idea began to gain steam. By September there were enough residents willing to participate, setting in motion a three-day photoshoot. The result is a 2023 calendar that artfully captures residents alongside the landscapes and traditions that have long defined the hamlet in the region of Murcia.

The month of October, for example, shows Nicolás in the 200-year-old home that once belonged to her grandfather and now houses the hamlet's only winery, while November is dedicated to Juanjo, a local farmer who poses with an assortment of strategically-placed squash.

The undisputed star of the calendar, however, is Pedro Sánchez. At 100 years old, the hamlet's oldest resident graces the month of December, shirtless and smiling as he holds up a bota, or wineskin. "He was the first one to say yes," said Nicolás.





Pedro Sánchez, who at 100 years old is Peña Zafra de Abajo's oldest resident, and Juanjo, below, who poses with an assortment of strategically placed squash for the calendar
PHOTOGRAPHS: JUANJO Y DAVID PHOTO/INSTAGRAM

Since its launch in October, orders for the €9 (£8) calendar have poured in from across Spain and even as far as Mexico.

"We've sold nearly 400," said Nicolás. "We first ordered 200 and thought we would end up giving away the extras but *Madre Mia*, they've been snapped up."

As news of the calendar travels, messages have flooded in from across the country, where rural depopulation threatens more than half of its surface area. "There were weeks where I didn't know whether to cry from happiness or sadness," she said, citing the many who shared their own struggles to stave off the demise of their hamlets. "We found out that we weren't the only ones in this situation."

For the few still left in Peña Zafra de Abajo, the success of the calendar has been made all the more poignant by the quarries around the hamlet, often leaving residents battling against the constant noise of mining activities and clouds of dust, said Nicolás, adding: "For us this has been a rebirth." Residents have already begun planning 2024's calendar.

CHARITY APPEAL 2022

citizens advice | locality the power of community

☐ Heating
☐ Eating

What if you could only pick one?

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The Guardian | The Observer

News
War in Ukraine

‘The Russians know if they lose Kreminna that their entire line of defence will fall’

Pjotr Sauer
Kyiv

Ukrainian forces appeared to edge closer to recapturing the Russian-controlled city of Kreminna in Luhansk province yesterday as heavy fighting continued in the east and south of the country.

The regional governor of Luhansk, Serhiy Haidai, said that part of the Russian command control of the city was forced to retreat to Rubizhne, a few miles to the south-east, as a result of Ukrainian military pressure.

“The Russians understand that if they lose Kreminna, their entire line of defence will fall,” Haidai wrote on the Telegram messaging app yesterday. “The Russian occupation troops managed to build a very powerful defence in a month, even a little more. They are bringing there a huge amount of reserves and equipment. They are constantly renewing their forces.” The Guardian could not independently confirm the battlefield developments.

Recapturing Kreminna and nearby Svatove could open the way for Kyiv to launch an offensive on Sievierodonetsk and Lysychansk, two cities Ukraine lost in the summer.

The fierce fighting continues, with no sign of imminent peace talks.

Late on Monday, Russia’s foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov, said Kyiv must accept Moscow’s demands of “demilitarisation and denazification” or else suffer defeat on the battlefield.

Lavrov’s statements signal that the Kremlin shows no intention of climbing down from its maximalist goals of regime change in Ukraine, despite Vladimir Putin’s claims on Sunday that Russia was ready for talks to end the war in Ukraine.

In its daily military briefing yesterday, Britain’s defence ministry said that Russian troops continued to focus their efforts on capturing the city of Bakhmut in the Donetsk region.

Russian army soldiers, alongside fighters from the Wagner private military group, have been trying to seize Bakhmut since July, after reaching the outskirts of the city.

Bakhmut has largely been ravaged after nearly five months of fighting and has been referred to by both sides as the “Bakhmut meat grinder”.

The battle for Bakhmut is seen as an important test for Wagner’s head, Yevgeny Prigozhin, who is believed to have recruited thousands of Russian convicts to help with the storming of the city.

Prigozhin has previously fiercely criticised the Russian defence ministry for its performance in Ukraine and has lauded Wagner as the country’s most capable fighting force.

In a video published on Monday and purportedly filmed near Bakhmut that will further fuel speculations over tensions within the Russian forces, two apparent Wagner soldiers are seen insulting Russia’s chief of general staff, Valery Gerasimov. “You are … the damn devil. We have nothing to fight with, we have no shells,” one of the men is heard saying.

The Guardian could not independently verify the footage, but when asked about the video by Russian journalists, Prigozhin appeared to express his approval for the actions of the soldiers, saying he travelled to Bakhmut to meet with them.

“The guys asked me to convey that when you sit in a warm office, the problems of the frontline are hard to hear,” Prigozhin said in a statement, in an apparent dig at the country’s top military command.

Last Thursday, Ukraine also claimed that Russia had “relocated” some of its aircraft away from the Engels airfield, which Moscow said was struck by a Ukrainian drone a day earlier, resulting in the death of three Russian servicemen.

Politician dead in pool

Indian police are investigating the sudden deaths of a wealthy Russian politician who reportedly criticised the Ukraine war and his travelling companion at a luxury hotel.

The body of Pavel Antov, 65, was found on Saturday in a pool of blood outside his lodgings in eastern Odisha state, where he was on holiday with three other Russian nationals. His death came two days after another member of the travel party, Vladimir Bidenov, was found unconscious after suffering an apparent heart att ack at the same hotel and could not be revived.

Police said they were reviewing CCTV footage, but so far there was no sign of foul play. Agence France-Presse

Lost children
Parents’ fear for offspring sent to camps in Crimea



◀ *Teenagers have lunch at the Artek summer camp in Gurzuf, a seaside resort on the south coast of Crimea that used to be popular with children*
PHOTOGRAPH: MAX VETROV/AFP/GETTY

Isobel Koshiw
Kyiv

Kherson city was liberated by Ukrainian forces in November. But for Nadia*, the horrors of the Russian occupation are still not over. Nadia sent her 14-year-old son to a Russian-run summer camp in Crimea - occupied by Moscow since 2014 - in October. He was meant to return after two weeks. It has now been more than two months.

In late November, he forwarded her a series of chilling voice messages from his camp leader telling him he would not be allowed back to Kherson because of his pro-Ukraine views.

“You are in Russia! You shouldn’t be doing different [types] of weird bullshit,” the camp leader in Yevpatoria, Crimea, said in the voice messages, which have been forwarded to the Guardian. “I don’t know who is going to deal with you now, but you are not going back to Kherson, that’s 100% [certain]. You can thank your mother for that.”

Like many parents, Nadia did not see sending her child to such a camp - known as summer camps even at other times of year - as making a pro-Russia statement. Parents often decided to send their children because their classmates were going and they were being offered a free holiday by the sea.

Nadia’s son left Kherson on 4 October and his stay at the camp was repeatedly extended by the authorities, said his mother. At first, the camp leaders told her that this was for safety reasons and then, after Ukrainian forces had entered Kherson city, they said he could not return because the city was now “occupied” by Ukraine.

Nadia’s case is one of many. Hundreds of Ukrainian children aged six to 16 from Kherson and Kharkiv have been stuck in Russian camps for weeks and in some cases months. Parents are told they can collect the children if they come in person, which requires them to cross the dangerous frontline or travel via Poland.



▶ *Vladimir Putin poses with children in June 2017 at the Artek children’s centre. Below, the camp pictured in 2014 after Russia’s annexation of Crimea*
PHOTOGRAPHS: ALEXEI DRUZHININ/KREMLIN; MAXIM SHEMETOV/REUTERS



Though the parents sent them willingly, they had agreed to a short stint. The UN convention on children’s rights bans the “illicit transfer and non-return of children abroad”, so Russia is obliged to return the children.

The Guardian spoke to eight parents who had sent their children to the camps. Some say they think Russia wants to exchange children for Russian prisoners of war. Others believe Moscow wants to assimilate them and keep them in Russia.

Ukraine’s human right’s ombudsman, Dmytro Lubinets, said the Russians were not interested in returning the children, and though Ukraine was trying, “the return of each child is like a special operation”.

In some cases, the Russian camps said they do not plan to send the children back. In other cases, children have been moved from one camp to another without the parents being informed. Ivana*, a mother from the Kherson region, made the long journey to collect her daughter from a camp in Crimea, only to be told the child had been moved to a camp hundreds of miles to the east. She then made a second long trip, and eventually she found her daughter.

Exactly how many Ukrainian children remain in Russian hands is very difficult to tell. In October, Russia’s state news agency, Tass, said there were about 4,500 children from Kherson and Zaporizhzhia in Crimean camps.

Part of the issue is that many of the parents refuse to come forward to the Ukrainian authorities. Dmytro*, who managed to get his son back by threatening a teacher into putting him on a bus in early October, said parents he knew feared being labelled as supporters of Russia.

Nadia said she and her son had argued at first because she did not want him to go to the camp, but eventually she gave in.

“I thought: OK, it’s two weeks, there’s the seaside, he’ll get a rest and come back.”

**Some names have been changed*

Archaeology

Sudanese scientists help end the 'west knows best' era

Jason Burke
Zeinab Mohammed Salih
Khartoum

A late morning in Khartoum. Inside a low, dusty building in the centre of the Sudanese capital, there are crates of artefacts, a 7ft replica of a 2,000-year-old stone statue of a Nubian god, and students rushing through the corridors. Outside is noisy traffic, blinding sunlight and both branches of the Nile.

Heading down one staircase are Sabrine Jamal, Nadia Musa, Athar Bela and Sabrine al-Sadiq, all studying archaeology at Khartoum University. Not one of them is older than 24 and they see themselves as pioneers, breaking new ground on a continent that has long attracted western expeditions, specialists and adventurers but whose own archaeologists have received less attention overseas.

"It is very important that Africans do African archaeology … because then we will have our own archaeological cultures. There is a lot we understand because we are from here. The idea that people from the west know best is changing," said Sadiq.

Jamal, 22, from the remote and war-torn South Kordofan province, said stereotypes promoted by films and literature in the west were out of date. "There is an idea of what an archaeologist looks like, but they should not have a certain image or colour or features or gender," she said.

For decades, the popular image of archaeologists in Africa has been at odds with an increasingly diverse reality. Dr Ghalia Garelnabi, the acting director of Sudan's national museum, said that when she was at university 30 years ago there were only three women studying archaeology - now there are 20.

"This is a very great change and an important one. There are more and more young women in Sudan who are interested to know about their history and they deserve to know this. Twelve years ago we had only foreign missions working here, but this is changing. Now we have many Sudanese missions digging at our sites," Garelnabi said.

Alex Vines, now the director of the Africa Programme at Chatham House in London, was an archaeologist in Zimbabwe and east Africa more than 30 years ago.

"Archaeology was dominated by western white archaeologists and has been completely transformed. It is now increasingly driven by indigenous research," he said.

Advocates of greater involvement by African archaeologists argue this would help a discipline that has become "detached from reality".

"The cost of living, climate crisis, migration, reflecting on our identity … Archaeology can and should be speaking to all these things. We need to build something new, something that is equitable, richer and relevant," said Dr Sada Mire, a Swedish-Somali archaeologist who is an associate professor of heritage studies at University College London.

The link between imperialist exploitation of the continent and archaeological research was established as early as 1798 when Napoleon invaded Egypt accompanied by teams of French specialists set on understanding the country's past but also taking away huge numbers of artefacts.

Sudan was a British colony for nearly 60 years, and then run by a series of autocrats often beholden to external powers. Few paid much attention to archaeology. In such circumstances, western support was important in preserving what little activity continued.

Dr Eglal el-Malik, the director of the conservation department of Sudan's National Corporation of Antiquities and Museums, said she was grateful to foreign archaeologists who "never stopped coming even in our darkest times. This was a very big help for us. They truly helped Sudan in maintaining and sustaining our work, and helped build capacity for young archaeologists. We needed professionals. Now we have many."

But the new wave of young archaeologists in Sudan and elsewhere on the continent face many obstacles. For women in particular, their choice of profession brings resistance from relatives and schools. "For three years my family was opposed. There were all these questions: what are you doing with this qualification? Why be an archaeologist if you're a woman? How are you going to travel alone? But I was very determined," Jamal said.

Men also face prejudice and ignorance. Joshua Kumbani, 31, who has conducted groundbreaking work in southern Africa on prehistoric music-making, said he was often laughed at when he told people he was an archaeologist.

"They can't understand why I chose this profession. They think I work in the dirt with old things. Some even accuse me of being a gravedigger. I have to explain this is not what archaeologists do," Kumbani said. "I think they get it from Indiana Jones and cinema. They don't have full information."



▼ *The Unesco world heritage site at Meroë - one of Sudan's most important archaeological treasures*
PHOTOGRAPH: GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO



▲ *Sabrine Jamal is one of the new generation of archaeology students*

New York Republican admits to lying about job and college history

Associated Press

A Republican congressman-elect has admitted that he lied about his job experience and college education during his successful campaign for a seat in the US House of Representatives.

George Santos, who was elected in November to represent parts of northern Long Island and north-east Queens in New York, told the New York Post: "My sins here are embellishing my résumé. I'm sorry."

He added: "I campaigned talking about the people's concerns, not my résumé … I intend to deliver on the promises I made during the campaign."

The New York Times raised questions last week about the life story that Santos, 34, had presented during his campaign. The Queens resident had said he obtained a degree from Baruch College in New York, but the school was unable to confirm this.

On Monday, Santos acknowledged: "I didn't graduate from any institution of higher learning. I'm embarrassed and sorry for having embellished my résumé." He added: "I own up to that … We do stupid things in life."

Santos had also said he had worked for Citigroup and Goldman Sachs, but neither company could find any records verifying that. Santos told the Post he had "never worked directly" for either financial firm, saying he had used a "poor choice of words".

He told the Post that Link Bridge, an investment company where he was a vice-president, did business with both.

Another news outlet, the Jewish American site the Forward, had questioned a claim on Santos's campaign website that his grandparents "fled Jewish persecution in Ukraine, settled in Belgium, and again fled persecution during WWII".

"I never claimed to be Jewish," Santos told the Post. "I am Catholic. Because I learned my maternal family had a Jewish background I said I was 'Jew-ish'."

Democrats including the House speaker, Nancy Pelosi, have suggested that Santos is unfit to sit in Congress. Some have called for him to resign his seat before officially taking it.



▲ *George Santos won a seat in the US House of Representatives last year*

Japanese cabinet minister resigns as 'Moonies' allegations continue

Justin McCurry
Tokyo

Japan's prime minister, Fumio Kishida, has ended the year facing fierce political headwinds after his reconstruction minister became the fourth member of his scandal-hit cabinet to resign in two months.

Kenya Akiba announced his resignation yesterday after opposition MPs accused him of election law violations and of having ties to the Unification church, a controversial religious group whose connections to the ruling party have sent Kishida's approval ratings to record lows.

"I take my responsibility very seriously as the person who makes appointments," Kishida said after Akiba had quit. "By rising to my political responsibilities, I hope to be fulfilling my duties as prime minister." Kishida effectively ordered Akiba to resign, according to Japanese media reports, in part to prevent the scandal from interfering with parliamentary debates over a budget bill, which includes a dramatic rise in defence spending that Kishida has argued is essential to counter growing threats from China and North Korea.

Akiba has denied allegations of mishandling funds and of having ties to the Unification church - more commonly known as the Moonies.

Revelations that the religious group has connections with many Liberal Democratic party (LDP) politicians have dogged Kishida since the assassination in July of the former prime minister Shinzo Abe.

Tetsuya Yamagami, who is suspected of shooting Abe, has told investigators that he targeted the politician because he believed he had ties to the church, which he blamed for bankrupting his family.

Akiba has denied any links with the church but acknowledged that the LDP branch he leads paid ¥48,000 (£300) to two entities associated with the group that he claimed were magazine subscriptions, according to Kyodo news agency.

Jet set
Rolls-Royce boss departs on a high
Page 25



Business

Investors buoyed by easing of China's travel restrictions

Anna Isaac

China's decision to ease rules on travel in and out of the country has offered investors hope that it could soften the toll from higher interest rates on global stock markets and unblock supply chains amid a dark outlook for 2023.

Chinese authorities said on Monday that inbound travellers would not have to quarantine on arrival from 8 January onwards. The announcement marked the latest in a series of steps to reopen the country, which is home to vital global supply chains.

Analysts at Goldman Sachs believe that despite the strain on China's medical systems amid a jump in Covid cases, the overall impact will be positive for its economy.

The steps to free up movement of people in China support its expectation for GDP growth above 5% in 2023, ahead of some Wall Street rivals.

"We view the new guidelines as a major step towards the full reopening, but caution on the increased challenges to China's medical system in the near term," the bank said in a research note published yesterday.

Shanghai airport, Macau's casinos and domestic and international Chinese airlines are set to benefit from the boost to travel from lifting restrictions, it said. Regional economies such as Thailand which also play a critical role in global supply chains are likely winners from Chinese business travellers and tourists.

Earlier statements from China on plans to reopen had already improved the outlook of some of the world's leading fund managers, according to a survey from Bank of America (BofA). Expectations for higher growth in China leapt to about three quarters, up from just 13% in November. The proportion expecting the global economy to weaken fell slightly to 69% down from 73% in November.

The heightened pace of removing restrictions in China comes as UK stock markets were set to reopen today after closing for the Christmas holiday. US stock indices were subdued yesterday amid thin holiday trading, dashing hopes of a year-end rally. In China the Shanghai stock exchange rose 1% and the CSI 300 Index gained 1.15%.

Investors are set to cling to any small improvement in the outlook at the end of 2022, after a poor year for global financial markets.

Even so, they may still be too optimistic on prospects for riskier assets such as developed economy stocks, according to analysts at Capital Economics, a financial consultancy firm.

"Investors seem increasingly to have come around to our view on inflation over the past couple of months, namely that it will fall very quickly in the US next year and a bit more slowly elsewhere," said Thomas Matthews in a note to clients.

This means that they expect the US Federal Reserve and some other major central banks to dial down plans for further interest rate hikes.

"However, unlike us, investors still seem to expect that this will be achieved without much of a slowdown in growth," he added.

US credit spreads, a measure which indicates the risk of borrowing in a market, suggest that investors expect US companies to fare relatively well next year. A range of corporate analyst reports in developed markets are still indicating some major economies might escape a recession.

However, while investment banks including JP Morgan believe these measures signal too much positivity and recession will hit the US in 2023 and 2024, Goldman Sachs disagrees.

"Our most out-of-consensus forecast for 2023 is our call that the US will avoid a recession and instead continue progressing toward a soft landing," it said on Monday.



▶ *China's zero-Covid rules have been eased, leading to hopes of the unblocking of global supply chains*
PHOTOGRAPH: HECTOR RETAMAL/AFP/GETTY

Former Labour MP Umunna advising tycoon linked to Royal Mail buyout bid

Anna Isaac

Chuka Umunna, the MP-turned-banker, is advising a Czech tycoon who was accused by union leaders of planning a secret takeover of Royal Mail.

The former Labour MP is one of a team of bankers working on Daniel Křetínský's UK interests, many of which are held within Vesa Equity Investment, including a 23% stake in Royal Mail's parent company, International Distributions Services (IDS).

Postal workers have held a wave of strikes amid souring relations between Royal Mail and the Communication Workers Union (CWU). The Czech billionaire also holds a 10% share in the supermarket chain Sainsbury's via Vesa, and is a part-owner of West Ham United football club.

Umunna joined the investment bank JP Morgan in 2021 to lead its European environmental, social and governance (ESG) work. His advisory role, first reported by the Telegraph, risks accusations of hypocrisy for the former Labour politician who was previously a fierce critic of the privatisation of Royal Mail.

Umunna did not respond to a request for comment.

In September, Royal Mail denied suggestions by Dave Ward, head of the CWU, that it was in talks regarding a private equity takeover by Vesa. That followed a letter from Ward to the then business secretary Kwasi Kwarteng suggesting that the Royal Mail owner IDS was in talks with Vesa regarding a "potential takeover bid".

Křetínský has been dubbed the "Czech sphinx" by Polish media due to his guarded approach in business and the media. The billionaire also owns UK power stations.

Vesa did not respond to a request for comment.

Křetínský's investment outfit's stake in Royal Mail was the subject of a national security investigation by the business department, which concluded in October.

The decision to take no action allows Vesa to increase its current stake in Royal Mail above 25%.

JP Morgan declined to comment on its work for Vesa or on the advisory role of Umunna's team .

FGS Global, part of the WPP group which absorbed PR company Finsbury and whose co-chairman Roland Rudd has also been linked with the Labour party, is also understood to be advising on Křetínský business interests.

FGS declined to comment.

Almost £12m owed by collapsed retailer Made.com to customers

Sarah Butler
Kalyeena Makortoff

More than 30,000 Made.com shoppers are collectively owed almost £12m they will not get back, according to the latest report by administrators to the collapsed furniture seller.

Shoppers paid £13.7m in deposits on large items such as sofas, according to documents filed with Companies House late last week. However, less than £1.9m has been recouped by customers through card charge-backs, which is where credit card providers refund borrowers when purchases go wrong.

The document makes clear there will not be enough funds to repay the £11.9m owed to customers, who are on a list of unsecured creditors that are among the last to be paid when money is recovered from the sale of the firm's remaining assets.

The list of unsecured creditors also includes suppliers and some employees.

Those assets include stock worth nearly £19m, which is expected to fetch less than £2m through auction.

Among Made.com's biggest unsecured creditors are Facebook (owed £1.4m), Google (owed about £1.7m) and the operator of the group's Antwerp warehouse (£1.8m).

However, Made.com's main lender, Silicon Valley Bank, is likely to recover nearly all the £3.8m it is owed, after the retailer Next bought the Made.com brand and database for £3.4m. Most of its employees and HMRC, which is owed £3.57m, will also be paid in full.

Administrators from PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) were appointed to Made.com on 9 November, completing a reversal of fortunes for the London-based retailer, which was valued at almost £800m when it listed on the stock exchange in 2021 and was heralded as the future of furniture retail.

Its collapse was the latest example of the bursting of the online retail bubble, after investors who bet that the switch to buying online during the pandemic would be permanent had their hopes dashed.

More than 300 people were made redundant when the company went into administration and nearly all 500 employed at the time are expected to lose their jobs.

Retail experts are expecting more retailers to collapse as a result of the cost of living crisis, as consumers rein in their spending because of surging bills.

30,000
Number of Made.com shoppers owed £11.9m that they are unlikely to get back from the online retailer

Analysis
Larry Elliott



In 2022 Truss binned economic orthodoxy – but what is it and what are the pillars of wisdom?

It was all over for Liz Truss's war on the economic orthodoxy as soon as she summoned Kwasi Kwarteng back from the annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund in Washington. If the sacking of the Treasury's top mandarin, Sir Tom Scholar, marked the beginning of the campaign against Whitehall beancounters, then the end came when Jeremy Hunt became the fourth chancellor of the exchequer of 2022.

What Truss meant by the orthodoxy was the Treasury's long-held aversion to running budget deficits and its belief that solid public finances are the bedrock of a successful economy. But for a more detailed look at what is the orthodoxy, here are the seven pillars of "wisdom" that differentiate the conventional from the maverick.

Pillar one: Bank of England independence
The Bank has been free to set interest rates since being granted its independence by Gordon Brown in 1997. Indeed, it was not just tax cuts that troubled the financial markets while Truss was prime minister: it was also her attacks on Threadneedle Street's handling of monetary policy and the fear that she intended to exert stronger political control.
The case for the orthodoxy: Politicians can't be trusted to set interest rates and the Bank (up until recently at least) has done a good job in hitting the government's 2% inflation target.
The case against: The decisions made by the Bank are very political even if made by technocrats.

Pillar two: macro-economic policy is mainly about control of inflation
Since the stagflation of the 1970s, macro policy has been about keeping inflation low, while supply side policies have been about raising growth rates.
The case for: Inflation is bad for growth and there is no trade-off that allows policymakers to choose a bit more growth at the expense of slightly higher inflation.
The case against: Growth, investment and improvements in productivity were all higher when full employment was the goal.

Pillar three: growth is good
Despite the increased focus on the climate emergency, the idea that a successful economic policy requires faster growth remains an article of faith. Rishi Sunak and the Labour leader, Sir Keir Starmer, vie with each other to come up with the most growth-friendly policies.
The case for: Growth has brought great benefits over the past 250 years and is needed to fund improvements in public services.
The case against: Growth is killing the planet.

Pillar four: free movement of goods, people and money
To be truly economically orthodox means opposing trade barriers, curbs on immigration and capital controls, because all these restrictions put up barriers to economic efficiency. Most of the fast-growing countries of east Asia have used protectionism to support economic development.
The case for: Protectionism means slower growth.
The case against: Without a degree of protectionism there will be no real renaissance of manufacturing.

Pillar five: the state should not be picking winners
This dates from 1970s Britain when large amounts of public money were spent on subsidies to state-owned companies. The struggles of the car industry led to a strong conviction that civil servants were hopeless at deciding which sectors to support.
The case for: British Leyland.
The case against: Other countries have found smart ways to nurture growth sectors of the economy through industrial policy.


▲ *Ex-chancellor Kwasi Kwarteng tried to resist economic orthodoxy*

Pillar six: Brexit is bad
Not all economists voted remain in the 2016 referendum but most of them did, on the grounds that it would mean weaker trade, less inward investment and a hit to productivity. There is no doubt that the policy establishment believes the decision to leave the European Union was a mistake.
The case for: Growth is bound to suffer if the UK cuts itself off from its main trading partner.
The case against: Brexit is a chance to do things differently.

Pillar seven: modern monetary theory is bunk
Modern monetary theory (MMT) represents a real challenge to the orthodoxy because it says countries that budget constraints don't really exist for countries that issue their own currency.
The case for: Governments have a nerve to say MMT is dangerous, given their willingness to turn on the electronic printing presses.
The case against: MMT will lead to hyperinflation.



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▼ *An inspection of a Rolls-Royce Trent XWB aero-engine at the Rolls-Royce delivery centre in Derby*
PHOTOGRAPH: GARY MARSHALL/ROLLS-ROYCE PLC



Engine trouble Rolls-Royce chief sees blue skies ahead

Jasper Jolly

Warren East says it has been a "privilege" to lead Rolls-Royce for seven years, as he prepares to retire on New Year's Eve. But it has also involved considerable pain.

East's battles have ranged from a £671m settlement for a bribery and corruption scandal from before his time, to the discovery of costly cracks in its jet engines. Then Covid-19 struck, grounding the aeroplanes whose engines Rolls-Royce builds and services.

The crisis was existential for arguably the UK's most illustrious industrial and storied company. East set about finding more than £7bn from investors and lenders, and cut 7,000 jobs.

Now, he says, "the tools are there" for his successor, former BP executive Tufan Erginbilgic, to improve its financial performance - and perhaps even emerge from the state of constant crisis. Erginbilgic, two years older than 61-year-old East, will take over on 1 January.

"I certainly hope he has an easier time in terms of issues," says East.

East, an Oxford-educated engineer, joined Rolls-Royce's board in 2014, but was hurriedly installed as chief executive after the abrupt exit of his predecessor, John Rishton. It was something of a surprise second act: East had, in 2013, announced his "retirement" as chief executive of Arm, the Cambridge-based chip designer that he built into the UK's most successful tech firm (before it was snapped up by Japan's SoftBank).

Rolls-Royce is a very different business, with 44,000 employees across 14 countries. Based in Derby, it sells jet engines at a loss and makes profits on maintenance later - so when during the pandemic the hours flown plunged to only about 10% of 2019 levels, it was a disaster. After generating just under £1bn in cash in 2019, it burned through £4.2bn in 2020, even with help from the UK government's furlough scheme to pay wages.

However, East says the company, which was nationalised in 1971 after falling into receivership because of the ballooning development costs of the RB211 engine, "never asked the government" for direct support this time around (although a £2bn loan facility was backed by a government agency).

The luxury cars business of the same name business was split from the core jet engines at the point of nationalisation.

"I think the world's in a different place to the 1970s," he says, sitting in Rolls-Royce's London office. "I'm not sure state rescue would have been practical from a political point of view."

Engine flying hours are back above 70% of pre-pandemic levels, but even if its recovery continues, the Covid scare has added weight to longer-term investor concerns. Does Rolls-Royce have the financial heft to go it alone? East is dismissive when asked about long-awaited consolidation in the sector, such as a takeover by America's Pratt & Whitney. "Yeah, there are always these trends," he sighs.

He argues the company is "absolutely fine". It has scale from its divisions building engines for boats and big land vehicles and its defence business making nuclear submarine reactors, and he also points to its 50% share of engines for large planes with two aisles.

However, if Rolls-Royce wants to win new work - and particularly if it wants to move into the faster-growing market for single-aisle planes - it will have to wait for aircraft makers Airbus and Boeing to commit to a new plane. That could take years. Boeing is still trying to recover from the 737 Max disasters; meanwhile, Airbus has the luxury of waiting and making easy profits.

East says Rolls-Royce is "absolutely certain that there will be another widebody plane" with two aisles. Throughout the pandemic cuts he continued to invest in a new engine capable of propelling 200-tonne aircraft while using a fifth less fuel.

Richard Aboulafia, a consultant at Aerodynamic Advisory, said it was "impressive" that Rolls-Royce had "stayed intact" through the pandemic and also continued to invest in the new engine, known as UltraFan, "despite the lack of a clear application and despite serious pressure on the company's engineering budget".

East said Rolls-Royce may end up recouping the UltraFan investment before it ever builds an engine because of progress in things such as materials and cooling techniques that it can apply to older engines.

There is another major factor holding back the development of a new plane: the deep uncertainty over how they will be powered. Airlines have committed to net zero carbon emissions by 2050, but without a clear plan.

Rolls-Royce is experimenting with new technologies. It has flown an single-seater battery electric plane at 345mph, and it last month carried out the world's first test of an aircraft engine using hydrogen. However, such efforts are not advanced. Rolls-Royce only employs about a dozen people directly on hydrogen, East says.

The aviation industry is instead betting heavily on sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) - derived from substances such as used-cooking oil - to get it to net zero. Planes will still emit carbon, but it will originate from the air rather than fossil fuels underground. It will be a crucial technology for the entire aviation industry, and East reckons there will be demand for SAF for at least 60 years. Relying on hydrogen is not an option.

"We can't, as a sector, wait for hydrogen," he says, given the doubts over how it will be used. "What if we got that wrong?"

East is a keen player of the church organ - he does weddings - but he hints that his latest retirement will still involve working on the energy transition beyond Rolls-Royce, albeit not as the leader of a big company.

He will also remain on the board of ASML, a Dutch company that plays a crucial role in the global economy as the sole maker of the most advanced semiconductor production equipment.

Given his experience at the head of two FTSE 100 companies, it would not be a surprise if East were tapped up by the UK government to help on industrial policy. East is careful not to criticise ministers for its recent hot-and-cold industrial strategy. He will only say that the government has had "a lot on its plate" in recent years.

East is optimistic about the prospects for UK manufacturing, and Britain's ability to produce new industrial champions.

"We do create some great engineers here," he says. "We do have a fantastic supply chain of small UK-based companies that can do extraordinary things and definitely punch above their weight on a global basis. It's a matter of coordination and getting that together, and having the will to actually go out and do it.

"It's very easy to get sucked into the day-to-day battles which happen in any business," he says. "Every now and again, remind yourself of how good it is."

PHOTOGRAPH: LINDA NYLIND/THE GUARDIAN



'I'm not sure state rescue would have been practical from a political point of view'

Warren East
Rolls-Royce CEO

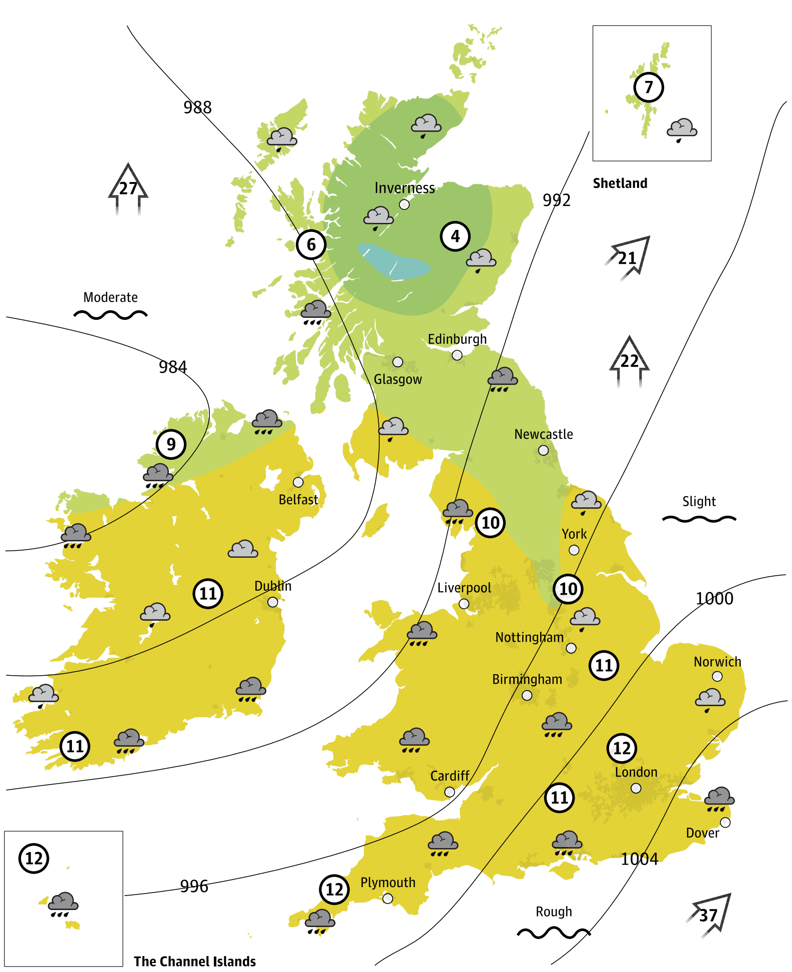

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Weather
Wednesday 28 December 2022

UK and Ireland Noon today

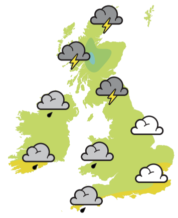
Sunny · Mist · Fog · Sunny intervals · Hazy · Mostly cloudy · Overcast/dull · Sunny showers · Sunny and heavy showers · Light showers · Rain · Sleet · Light snow · Snow showers · Heavy snow · Ice · Thundery rain · Thundery showers · Temperature, ºC · Wind speed, mph · Windy

35C · 30 · 25 · 20 · 15 · 10 · 5 · 0 · -5 · -10 · -15 · -20

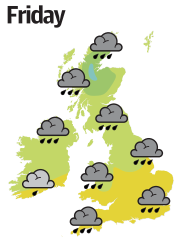


Forecast

Low 6 High 7
Tomorrow



Low 4 High 9
Friday



Carbon count

Daily atmospheric CO_2 readings from Mauna Loa, Hawaii (ppm):

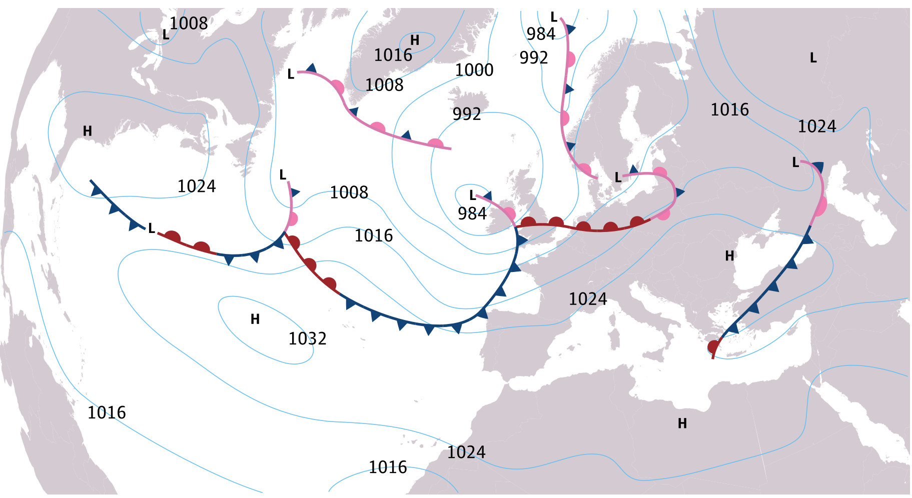
Latest	
26 Dec 2022	419.53
Weekly average	
18 Dec 2022	419.11
27 Dec 2021	417.31
27 Dec 2012	394.91
Pre-industrial base	*280*
Safe level	*350*

Source: NOAA-ESRL

Around the UK

	Lows and highs	Precipitation	Air pollution
London	7 – 11	90%	Low
Manchester	6 – 11	80%	Low
Edinburgh	5 – 8	85%	Low
Belfast	5 – 10	90%	Low
Glasgow	6 – 7	85%	Low
Inverness	2 – 4	80%	Low
Leeds	6 – 11	85%	Low
Liverpool	7 – 11	80%	Low
Newcastle	5 – 10	80%	Low
Sheffield	5 – 10	90%	Low

Atlantic front



Cold front

Warm front

Occluded front

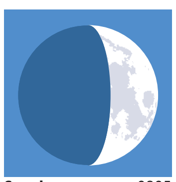
Trough

High tides

Source: © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Times are local UK times

Aberdeen	**0503**	4.1m	**1702**	4.2m
Avonmouth	**1045**	12.6m	**2311**	12.1m
Barrow	**0246**	8.8m	**1506**	9.1m
Belfast	**0241**	3.3m	**1450**	3.7m
Cobh	**0906**	4.0m	**2125**	3.8m
Cromer	**1025**	4.6m	**2210**	4.9m
Dover	**0212**	6.6m	**1445**	6.2m
Dublin	**0308**	3.8m	**1516**	4.1m
Galway	**0841**	5.1m	**2120**	4.7m
Greenock	**0350**	3.3m	**1557**	3.7m
Harwich	**0252**	3.8m	**1529**	3.9m
Holyhead	**0144**	5.3m	**1359**	5.6m
Hull	**0955**	7.0m	**2154**	7.3m
Leith	**0610**	5.4m	**1821**	5.4m
Liverpool	**0228**	8.8m	**1449**	9.1m
London Bridge	**0509**	6.7m	**1741**	7.0m
Lossiemouth	**0322**	3.9m	**1521**	4.0m
Milford Haven	**0950**	6.8m	**2217**	6.3m
Newquay	**0844**	6.9m	**2112**	6.4m
North Shields	**0708**	4.8m	**1909**	5.0m
Oban	**0912**	3.8m	**2127**	3.3m
Penzance	**0813**	5.4m	**2041**	4.9m
Plymouth	**0923**	5.4m	**2156**	5.0m
Portsmouth	**0308**	4.7m	**1508**	4.5m
Southport	**0155**	8.5m	**1416**	8.8m
Stornoway	**1032**	4.8m	**2320**	4.1m
Weymouth	**1031**	1.3m	**2311**	0.9m
Whitby	**0740**	5.2m	**1943**	5.4m
Wick	**0253**	3.3m	**1454**	3.5m
Workington	**0249**	7.8m	**1508**	8.1m

Sun & Moon



Sun rises	0805
Sun sets	1557
Moon rises	1137
Moon sets	2239
First Quarter	30 Dec

Forecasts and graphics provided by **AccuWeather** ©2022

Lighting up

Belfast	1605 to 0848
Birm'ham	1600 to 0818
Brighton	1602 to 0803
Bristol	1609 to 0816
Carlisle	1550 to 0836
Cork	1630 to 0841
Dublin	1613 to 0841
Glasgow	1550 to 0849
Harlech	1607 to 0829
Inverness	1537 to 0859
London	1557 to 0805
M'chester	1557 to 0825
Newcastle	1545 to 0832
Norwich	1546 to 0807
Penzance	1627 to 0821

Terrawatch

Over the past 20 years, sea levels have risen twice as much on Italy's Amalfi coast as on Spain's Costa del Sol, a study shows.

Researchers combined data from tide gauges and satellites with ice melt measurements to model change across the Mediterranean basin since 1960. They found the sea level fell by about 9mm between 1960 and 1989, owing to increased atmospheric pressure. But since 1989, ocean warming and land ice melting have driven rapid rises, reaching an average rate of 3.6mm a year in the basin over the past two decades. The rise has not been spread evenly, however.

Their findings, published in JGR: Oceans, show the Adriatic, Aegean and Levantine seas have risen by 8cm over two decades, while the Cretan passage in the eastern Mediterranean has risen by half this amount. They suspect this uneven pattern is due to changes in water density and circulation patterns.

This has implications for coastal engineering. "Structures like sea walls are effective but expensive. Reliable estimates of local sea level rise will help planners make cost-effective decisions," says Dr Francisco Mir Calafat, from the National Oceanography Centre in Liverpool. **Kate Ravilious** *@katerav*

Around the world

Algiers	23	Lisbon	17
Ams'dam	10	Madrid	12
Athens	17	Malaga	20
Auckland	26	Melb'rne	28
B Aires	29	Mexico C	18
Bangkok	30	Miami	25
Barcelona	16	Milan	9
Basra	19	Mombasa	31
Beijing	2	Moscow	-1
Berlin	8	Mumbai	32
Bermuda	21	N Orleans	20
Brussels	10	Nairobi	26
Budapest	6	New Delhi	20
C'hagen	6	New York	6
Cairo	20	Oslo	-6
Cape Town	25	Paris	11
Chicago	5	Perth	30
Corfu	17	Prague	6
Dakar	27	Reykjavik	-9
Dhaka	26	Rio de J	31
Dublin	11	Rome	16
Florence	13	Shanghai	10
Gibraltar	19	Singapore	30
H Kong	20	Stockh'm	-3
Harare	28	Strasb'g	10
Helsinki	0	Sydney	28
Istanbul	12	Tel Aviv	18
Jo'burg	28	Tenerife	23
K Lumpur	30	Tokyo	11
K'mandu	16	Toronto	4
Kabul	10	Vancouv'r	7
Kingston	31	Vienna	6
Kolkata	26	Warsaw	5
L Angeles	18	Wash'ton	8
Lagos	30	Well'ton	21
Lima	25	Zurich	8

Sport



Rugby union

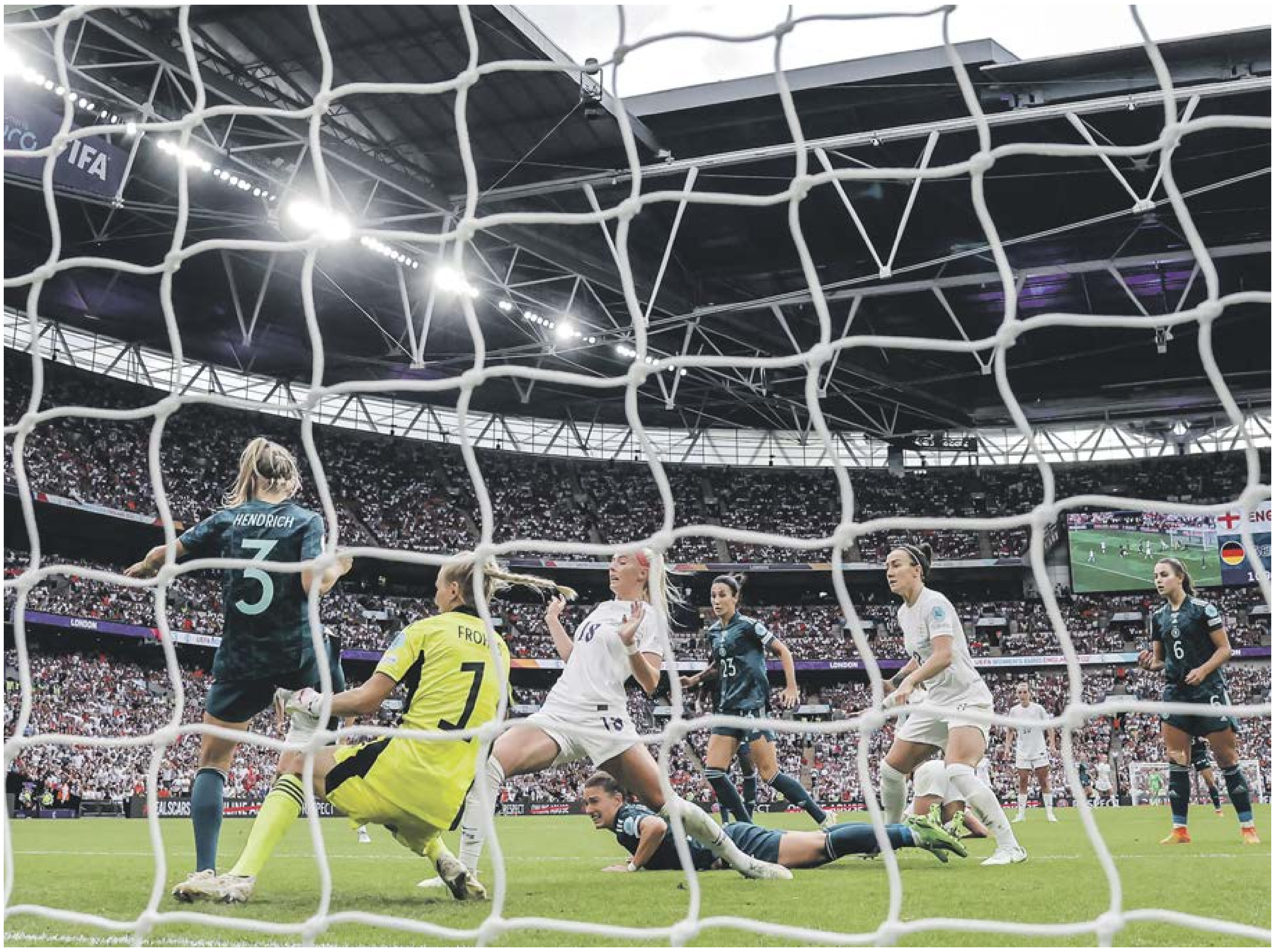
Robert Kitson on why Ruby Tui is star of the year

Page 30 →

Football

David Squires' review of 2022 … in 27 objects

Page 33 →



▲ *Chloe Kelly's winner sparked joyful scenes at Wembley as England beat Germany 2-1 to win Euro 2022*
TOM JENKINS/THE GUARDIAN

John Brewin

Moments of the year Football

World Cup glory for Messi, Lionesses roar, and the end of Abramovich

1 A World Cup in Qatar

The greatest? Qatar 2022 served up the best World Cup final for decades and Lionel Messi, in finally lifting the World Cup, confirmed himself as the finest player of the 21st century. Gianni Infantino and the host nation had the showpiece they wanted, Messi and Kylian Mbappé coming to the party to echo the game's greats. Mbappé's hat-trick took him past Pelé, Vavá and Geoff Hurst as the highest scorer in World Cup final ties, while Messi lived up to the ghost of Diego Maradona. It followed a tournament that fully entertained and in Morocco delivered a first African and Arab team to the semi-finals. That still wasn't enough to change anyone's opinion of Qatar hosting a World Cup. The organisers remained defensive, discussions of migrant labour and human rights deflected by hails of whataboutery. Beyond the feats of Messi and Mbappé, empty stadiums in the desert are now monuments to the lives lost in constructing a show of opulence.

2 Lionesses roar to victory

It came home. Chloe Kelly's winning goal in extra time against Germany at Wembley secured a first senior title for an England national team since 1966. Sarina Wiegman was the calming mastermind behind it, the Dutch coach winning a second successive European Championship, harnessing the wealth of English talent developed in the Women's Super League. The goals were scored by Kelly and Ella Toone, each introduced from the bench, Wiegman's game management taking the match away from an experienced Germany team overwhelmed by the Lionesses' depth of talent. Beth Mead, with six goals, had inspired England to the final, but an injury forced her to give way to Kelly in London. The road to Wembley had not been totally serene, requiring a poacher's finish from Toone to take Spain to extra time in a quarter-final at Brighton. And the final itself supplied high drama before scenes of post-match celebration as a new audience for the women's game was welcomed to the fold.

3 Chelsea for sale

When Russian forces moved into Ukraine on 24 February Roman Abramovich's ownership of Chelsea entered its endgame. The UK government imposing sanctions on Russian oligarchs made that a fait accompli. Abramovich first sought to hand the stewardship to the club's charitable foundation before, once it became clear his UK assets were to be frozen, confirming the club was for sale. It ended 19 years of a regime that changed the face of English football, accelerating transfer spending and introducing the concept of Premier League clubs as status symbols for the planet's super-rich. A bidding process was won in May by a consortium led by Connecticut's Todd Boehly partnered with the investment firm Clearlake Capital, for £4.25bn. That hefty purchase price surely played a part in the American-owned Liverpool and Manchester United soon enough being prospected for potential sales or investment.

4 Chaos in Paris

The Champions League final on 28 May, between Real Madrid and Liverpool, was a tight, tense match won by the better team in the Spanish side, the goal scored by Vinícius Júnior, though with Madrid's goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois outstanding. Perhaps those facts are better remembered in Spain than on Merseyside, though fans from Madrid were also caught up in chaos caused by the gross mismanagement of the policing and stewarding of the occasion. Liverpool fans crushed against each other outside the stadium gates brought back bitter, painful memories of Hillsborough in 1989. Distressed, corralled down narrow passages by heavy-handed police and kept waiting as technology failed at the turnstiles, fans were then sprayed with teargas. The French government, the police and Uefa's immediate response of putting blame on fake tickets and fan behaviour brought back further echoes of Hillsborough. This time, the cover-up lasted hours rather than decades and a Uefa inquiry is in train.

5 A Camp Nou record

The growth of the women's game continued in club football and when Barcelona hosted Real Madrid on 30 March a record crowd saw a clásico in the quarter-finals of the Champions League. The attendance reached 91,553 and the home team turned on the style, winning 5-2, 8-3 on aggregate. Barcelona looked unstoppable that night - Alexia Putellas, the eventual winner of the 2022 Ballon d'Or, resplendent - and yet in the final the defending champions, who had won every game in La Liga, lost against Lyon, inspired by the brilliant Ada Hegerberg. The Azteca Stadium crowd for the 1971 Women's World Cup final between Denmark and Mexico in Mexico City, estimated at more than 100,000, presents another barrier to break but the sight of women's football in venues such as the Camp Nou is becoming commonplace.

▼ *Lionel Messi lived up to the ghost of Maradona by leading Argentina to World Cup glory*
SHAUN BOTTERILL/FIFA/GETTY IMAGES



Racing

The Two Amigos holds on for Welsh National win

Greg Wood

Thirteen months since one of the more difficult days of her training career, Nicky Martin had an afternoon she will never forget at Chepstow yesterday as The Two Amigos bravely fought off all challengers from the front to win the Coral Welsh National at the third time of asking.

The feature event of Chepstow's season had long been an obvious target for The Two Amigos, who finished fifth in the Christmas marathon in 2019 and then a close second a season later. On the day that entries were due in November 2021, however, Martin was "having a few dramas" on her Somerset farm and forgot about the entry deadline until it had passed.

As Martin remarked at the time, though, "maybe these things happen for a reason", and The Two Amigos' moment in the spotlight finally arrived in suitably defiant fashion.

David Prichard, his jockey, sent the 10-year-old straight into the lead, with The Big Breakaway and The Big Dog in close attendance, and faced down every challenge over the course of three-and-three-quarter miles.

A mistake two out ended The Big Dog's hopes of victory and Joe Tizzard's The Big Breakaway emerged as the final challenger for a race being run in memory of Tizzard's sister, Kim Gingell, who died in May 2020 at the age of just 43.

Gingell's son Freddie, on fourth-home Truckers Lodge, was also in contention in the home straight but The Two Amigos refused to yield and won by a length and a quarter.

Martin's Chepstow hex remained at least partially intact, as she was forced to miss The Two Amigos' victory due to illness, but it was still a huge moment for her small operation.

"That was absolutely brilliant," she said from her home. "It's such a shame we weren't there, but I'm full of flu. We desperately needed the rain for him, we were praying for it and it all panned out perfectly. He really deserved it, he'd run so well in it twice before and he's so popular. Dave did what he was told, get to the front and dictate the pace because he had no weight.

"It's great for Dave, too. He doesn't get that many rides and as a Welshman, it will mean the world to him."

The big race of the day at Kempton was also won by a strong-staying front-runner, although the task faced by Editeur Du Gite, a 28-1 outsider, in the Desert Orchid Chase was eased significantly at an early stage when Edwardstone, the 2-5 favourite, blundered and unseated Tom Cannon at the fifth fence.

Editeur Du Gite then went clear rounding the home turn and easily held off the challenge of Nube Negra, the 4-1 second-favourite, over the final three fences.

"They are a great bunch of owners," Gary Moore, the winner's trainer, said. "They had Sire De Grugy [the former Champion Chase winner] and now this horse. He is no Sire De Grugy, but he ain't far behind him."

In Ireland, Willie Mullins enjoyed what was, even by his high standards, a remarkable afternoon at Leopardstown as he won six of the seven races, missing out on going through the card only when not one of his eight runners in the Paddy Power Handicap Chase could make the first 10 home.

The winner of that race was Eric McNamara's Real Steel, at 33-1, who started his racing career in the Mullins yard, while the perennial Irish champion gained compensation for narrowly missing out on a clean sweep with Grade One wins for Blue Lord, in a two-mile chase, and his leading novice hurdler, Facile Vega.

Mullins's other wins on the card included a debut win over fences for Dysart Dynamo, who was a faller in last season's Supreme Novice Hurdle at Cheltenham after setting off as joint-favourite alongside the outstanding Constitution Hill.

Dysart Dynamo made all the running to win unchallenged by 28 lengths and is now priced at around 7-1 for the Arkle Trophy at Cheltenham in March, in a market headed by Nicky Henderson's Jonbon at 6-4.

Greg Wood's tips

Catterick **11.53** Trac **12.28** Chase A Fortune **1.03** I Am Gonna Be **1.38** Myburg 2.13 Arthur's Quay **2.48** Bents Hollow **3.25** Billams Legacy
Leicester **12.10** Gardener **12.45** Unexpected Party **1.20** Ambassador **1.55** Ben Buie **2.35** Martinhal (nap) **3.10** Our Jet (nb) **3.40** Sindabella
Newcastle **3.20** Dream Harder **3.55** Perfect Swiss **4.25** Central Hall **4.55** Streak Lightning **5.25** Clipsham La Habana **5.55** South Dakota Sioux **6.25** One More Dream


▲ David Prichard celebrates after winning the Coral Welsh Grand National
DAVID DAVIES/PA


◀ Joe Marler attempts to stop Gabriel Ibitoye making a break
DAVID ROGERS/GETTY

Rugby union *Gallagher Premiership*

Ibitoye's magic moment stuns Quins and ends Bristol's winless run

Harlequins	12
Bristol	15

Gerald Meagher
Twickenham Stoop

Bristol climbed off the foot of the table with a dogged victory against Harlequins, owing much to Gabriel Ibitoye's moment of magic against his former club, plenty to their hosts' litany of wasted chances and everything to one of the best tap tackles you are ever likely to see.

Harlequins were utterly dominant in the second half in terms of territory and possession but could not find their cutting edge. The weather was not helping but Bristol weathered the storm until André Esterhuizen appeared to be in the clear and certain to score with about a minute to go.

AJ MacGinty had other ideas, however, and clipped his heels at full stretch, forcing the Springbok to stumble and allowing Tom Whiteley to force the ball from his grasp just before his momentum took him over the line. When things like that go against you, it is not your day. For Bristol, call it revenge for that semi-final defeat of 2021 from which they have never really recovered.

Earlier Ibitoye had put Bristol ahead with a fine finish. It came in the first half - Bristol, playing into the wind and rain, did not score a point in the second half and never looked likely to - but such was Harlequins' profligacy it did not matter. It would be easy to say Quins would not have been quite so error-prone on the more manicured lawn of Twickenham - where this match was supposed to be played - but that is no excuse and does Bristol a disservice. They had not won in the league since September and, when on such runs, wins such as this are harder to come by.

They took a 10-point lead into the interval after an ill-tempered first half in which Harlequins threatened only when Esterhuizen was able to make a dent in the visitors' defence. They lost Ellis Genge before kick-off - the England prop absent to attend the birth of his second child - but began like a team desperate to climb off the foot of the table.

Harlequins were not helped when Will Evans, who has had plenty of injury problems of late, was replaced after less than a minute following a collision with Semi Radradra and soon after MacGinty kicked the opening penalty. A driving maul, finished by Harry Thacker after the Bristol hooker had won a penalty on halfway, extended the advantage.

Harlequins clicked into gear thereafter and, after countless phases and with Esterhuizen prominent, Josh Bassett finished well in the left-hand corner. Tommy Allan missed the conversion and then Joe Marchant had a try ruled out after doing all the hard work with Danny Care's speculative kick, with Quins playing advantage, but failing to ground the ball after climbing high to gather.

Things turned nasty when Joe Marler appeared to bait Jake Heenan into a reaction at a scrum. Pat Lam, the Bristol director of rugby, said: "Something was said and there was a reaction from Jake I have never seen before. We are all custodians of the game - players, coaches - and one thing we all value and we all work hard to keep is the right values and spirit. He reacted to something that was said. That is what I know happened. I will leave that to other people, we will just crack on."

A few minutes after the incident, Harlequins had a penalty turned over when Care got too hot under the collar. Bristol worked the ball wide to Ibitoye, who had the space to cut in from the left and finish off a fine try.

Harlequins, with the wind at their backs, were on top at the start of the second half but Care was denied a fine score - again after countless phases - for just going into touch on the left. They continued to press and Care set up their second try on the hour, kicking across field to Cadan Murley.

Bristol held firm - with the help of some poor Harlequins handling - until six minutes to go but Allan chose to kick a penalty for the corner rather than go for the three points which would have levelled the scores.

Another knock-on left victory in sight for the visitors. That was until the referee Karl Dickson spotted an infringement and sent Ibitoye to the sin-bin for a high tackle on Esterhuizen. The lineout went awry, however, and with the one last chance that Harlequins had MacGinty and Whiteley combined to deny them.

Harlequins
David; Murley (Beard 71), Marchant, Esterhuizen, Bassett; Allan, Care; Marler (Baxter 57), Walker, Louw (Kerrod 57), Hammond Herbst (Matthews 60), White, Evans (Lawday 1), Dombrandt (capt)
Tries Bassett, Murley. **Con** Allan

Bristol
Lane (Lloyd 53); Morahan, Radradra, Bedlow (O'Connor ht), Ibitoye; MacGinty, Uren (Whiteley 53); Y Thomas (Woolmore 57), Thacker (Kerr 79), Lahiff (Tyack 65), Batley, Vui (Stooke 70), Luatua (capt), Heenan, Bradbury (D Thomas 71)
Tries Thacker, Ibitoye **Con** MacGinty. **Pen** MacGinty **Sin-bin** Ibitoye 75

Referee Karl Dickson **Attendance** 14,800

Sport In brief

Cricket

England confirm tour dates for Bangladesh

England's schedule for their rearranged white-ball tour of Bangladesh next March has been finalised. The tour will start with the first ODI on 1 March at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Dhaka with the second at the same venue two days later. The third match will be played at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram on 6 March. Chattogram will then stage the first T20 fixture on 9 March with two further games back in Dhaka on 12 and 14 March. **PA Media**

Rugby union

Underhill signs new deal to stay at Bath

Sam Underhill has committed his future to Bath by signing a new "long-term" contract with the Premiership club. The 26-year-old England flanker's previous deal had been due to expire in summer 2023 but Underhill has agreed to stay on for an undisclosed period". **PA Media**

Winter sports

Shiffrin claims 78th win to close in on record

Mikaela Shiffrin moved nearer to the women's record for World Cup victories with the 78th win of her career at Semmering, Austria when she beat Slovakia's Petra Vlhova into second to win the giant slalom. The 27-year-old American is now only four wins behind the record set by her retired compatriot Lindsey Vonn. **Guardian sport**

The year in review
Black Ferns take title, Ireland glory, and Jones departs

The Women's World Cup final was a landmark occasion but, **Robert Kitson** writes, the demise of Wasps and Worcester signals difficult times for the game

Players of the year
1 Ruby Tui *(New Zealand)*
A constant threat on the field, a breath of fresh air off it.
2 Josh van der Flier *(Ireland)*
Never seems to have a bad game for club or country, regardless of the quality of the opposition.
3= Eben Etzebeth *(South Africa)*
At 31 already has 110 Springbok caps and shows no signs of easing up.
Emiliano Boffelli *(Argentina)*
As accurate under pressure as any of his round-ball compatriots.

Head coach of the year
1 Andy Farrell (Ireland) Guided his side to a historic series win in New Zealand. Enough said.
2 Wayne Smith (Black Ferns)
Architect of one of the game's greatest repair jobs, leading the Black Ferns to retain the World Cup.
3 Steve Diamond (Worcester)
Showed impressive leadership in adversity during Worcester's financial meltdown.

Most memorable games
1 New Zealand 34 England 31
Women's Rugby World Cup final, Auckland, 12 November.
One of the great games and a landmark occasion for women's rugby.
2 New Zealand 22 Ireland 32
Wellington, 16 July.
Not only did they win the series but Ireland were 22-3 up at half-time in the third-Test decider.
3 Japan 31 New Zealand 38
Tokyo, 29 October.
A weakened All Blacks side, sure, but the Brave Blossoms were irresistible at times.

Most eye-catching tries
1 Edoardo Padovani
Italy v Wales, Six Nations
One of the great championship scores, created by the jinking Ange Capuozzo and finished by Padovani.
2 Abby Dow
England v Canada
Women's RWC semi-final
England were under the cosh until Abby "Wow" finished a sensational length-of-the-field team try.
3 Rodrigo Fernández
Chile v USA
A truly remarkable individual effort on a saturated pitch in Santiago.

Emerging players to watch
Kurt-Lee Arendse *(South Africa)*
Henry Arundell *(England)*
Ange Capuozzo *(Italy)*

Rugby ambassadors of the year
1 Doddie Weir *(Scotland)*
2 Kevin Sinfield (*Leicester, England*)
3= Sarah Hunter *(England)*
Ellis Genge *(England)*

Most uplifting moments
1 Women's Rugby World Cup, New Zealand The rising profile of the women's game is great to see.
2) Chile qualify for men's RWC 2023
Chile's qualifying playoff against the USA Eagles produced as dramatic a finale as anyone (Americans aside) could have wished for.
3) New Zealand Rugby's appointment of Dame Patsy Reddy as the union's first female chair
Overdue but still excellent news.

Most depressing moments
1= The financial demise of **Wasps** and **Worcester**; the abuse of **Wayne Barnes**'s family; **Bernard Laporte**'s corruption case; **Cherif Traorè** receiving a rotten banana from a Benetton teammate.

Most influential Premiership players
1 Julián Montoya *(Leicester)*
2 Theo McFarland *(Saracens)*
3 Tommy Reffell *(Leicester)*

Rassie Erasmus award for refereeing decision of the year
Mathieu Raynal *(France)*
The closing moments of a tight Test between Australia and New Zealand in Melbourne was an interesting time to award a match-turning sanction for time-wasti ng against the Wallaby fly-half Bernard Foley.

Best match-day atmosphere
1 Eden Park, Auckland (see above).
2 Northland Events Centre, Whangarei.
3 Twickenham Stoop.

Rest in peace
Eddie Butler *(Wales)*, Phil Bennett *(Wales)*, Mike Davis *(England)*, Tom Kiernan *(Ireland)*, Doddie Weir *(Scotland)*, Va'aiga 'Inga' Tuigamala *(New Zealand/Manu Samoa)*, Joeli Vidiri *(New Zealand)*, Pedrie Wannenburg *(South Africa)*, Kelly Meafua *(Samoa)*, Paul McNaughton *(Ireland)*, Jerry Holland *(Ireland)*, John Brain *(Gloucester)*, Steve Black *(Newcastle and Lions fitness adviser)*, Dave Rollitt *(Bristol and England)*, Donald McLeod *(Scotland and Lions doctor)*, Tom Smith *(Scotland and Lions)*, Dave Sims *(Gloucester and England)*.

Young players to watch in 2023
Ben Loader *(London Irish)*, **Dafydd Jenkins** *(Exeter)*, **Joe Carpenter** *(Sale)*, **Sam Maunder** *(Exeter)*, **Emeka Ilione** *(Leicester)*.

Key quotes of 2022
"I was quite confident we were on the right track, leading up to the World Cup. And I still have that belief. But if others don't share that, then that's their decision."
Eddie Jones, *now former head coach of England.*

"We are encouraged by the solid progress the team has made during this Six Nations …"
RFU statement in March. *Eddie Jones was sacked in December*.

"I wouldn't be here doing the job unless I thought we were capable of winning things."
Warren Gatland on his return as head coach of Wales.

"I want to make sure this doesn't happen to those still in the game. We want to make sure we're the only generation of players this happens to." The 44-year-old former England hooker **S teve Thompson**, whose early onset dementia has left him unable to recall winning the 2003 World Cup.

"I was definitely dead. I died twice. My doctors said I had a 1% chance of surviving. God saved me. I now live differently. I don't worry about small or stupid things which I thought were important before." Georgia's head coach, **Levan Maisashvili**, reflecting on his survival after contracting Covid-19 in South Africa in 2021.

"That was the most phenomenal rugby moment of my life, standing out there and hearing that crowd chanting the names of these girls."
Wayne Smith on coaching the **Black Ferns** to their World Cup win.

"We don't need that in the game and I'd have thought he'd have learned his lesson by now, if it is him doing this."
Nigel Owens offers his verdict on **Rassie Erasmus**'s online comments about refereeing decisions.

"I think the rolling maul has got out of hand, personally. Perhaps in England the number of spectators looks after itself because of the size of the population but in this part of the world it doesn't. I think it's a part of the game we could look at and say: 'Can we make this a greater contest?'" The former **All Blacks** head coach **Graham Henry**.

"We thought we could turn the tanker around but it's ended up like the Titanic, sadly. The ship has sunk, the captains are nowhere to be seen."
Financially stricken **Worcester**'s director of rugby, **Steve Diamond**.

"Rugby is football's little brother, reaching up to the table to try and grab some food. In order to do that you have to make a constant effort to do more. I might be wrong but I'm not sure if rugby is doing that."
Maro Itoje on the need for rugby union to market itself better.

"They stand there almost like little schoolboys going: 'Er, um …' I just say: 'Call me Sir.' I really don't mind."
Sara Cox *(top female referee)*.

Three wishes for 2023
1 A wonderful men's Rugby World Cup. The sport as a whole badly needs one.
2 More help and support for former players suffering from the symptoms of early onset dementia.
3 Greater success for teams prepared to run the ball from their own half.

And finally …
Many thanks to subscribers and readers who have followed our rugby coverage in the Guardian and the Observer. Wishing you all a happy new year and see you back here in 2023.


Joe Carpenter
One to watch

Ruby Tui
Player of the year

Andy Farrell
Head coach of the year

Marsch fears Haaland's return to birthplace



▼ Jesse Marsch and Erling Haaland had an 'outstanding' spell in Austria
SIMON STACPOOLE/OFFSIDE/GETTY

Manchester City visit Elland Road armed with a fearsome forward developed by Leeds' manager while at Salzburg

Louise Taylor

When Jesse Marsch moved into the manager's office at Elland Road last March, two Norwegians were at the front of the queue to congratulate him.

Marsch has been close to Erling Haaland and his father, the former Leeds midfielder Alf-Inge, since he coached the former at RB Salzburg but, for once, the American is not exactly looking forward to their latest reunion tonight.

His team's sometimes vulnerable defence will need to maintain maximum concentration when Haaland junior and his Manchester City teammates arrive in Yorkshire as the curtain rises on Leeds's first home match for 53 days.

"Erling texted me as soon as the schedule came out last summer and said he was most excited for the game here," says Marsch. "I gave him permission to have a small hamstring injury for it!

"The time I had with Erling in Austria was outstanding. We had an incredible relationship and, when I got the job here, he and his father were incredibly supportive and excited for me. Erling was born in Leeds and his father has history in this city. Due to that, Erling has this club in his heart but I fear it will motivate him a little bit more against us."

Marsch has become well accustomed to facing endless questions about how best to contain a striker who has not stopped scoring since joining City from Borussia Dortmund but, even equipped with his detailed inside knowledge, he accepts there are no easy answers. "It will come down to luck in certain moments," he admits. "Erling's instincts are incredibly unique. Containing him involves a keen awareness of where he likes to be."

In 2018 Haaland appeared keen on a return to his birthplace. The then Molde striker was invited to Leeds and toured the club's facilities ahead of a potential transfer. Yet in a "sliding doors" moment the enticing prospect was snatched away as directors quibbled over the £4m asking price and Salzburg stepped in.

How Marsch could do with a centre-forward even half as efficient as he endeavours to banish his team's enduring relegation worries. The 49-year-old remains acutely aware that some Leeds fans wanted him replaced before the World Cup-induced domestic hiatus but Haaland junior is unstinting in his praise for a former colleague he describes as "an amazing manager" and an "amazing guy".

When the pair worked together at Salzburg in 2019, heading was Haaland's sole discernible weakness but, after devoting long training-ground hours to honing the forward's aerial skills, Marsch is credited with filling that key gap in an otherwise formidably intimidating armoury.

Over Christmas an important off-field space opened up at Leeds. With Mark Jackson, the first-team coach, heading south to manage MK Dons, Marsch is presiding over a changing of the backroom guard at a club where, sooner or later, the minority shareholder 49ers Enterprises - an investment group connected to the San Francisco 49ers - are expected to exercise an option to buy out the current chairman and majority stakeholder, Andrea Radrizzani.

When, and indeed whether, this happens could hinge on the team retaining Premier League status.

Tyler Adams, Leeds's influential USA central midfielder, is suspended and the similarly impressive goalkeeper Illan Meslier faces a late fitness test to assess the extent of his recovery from a debilitating bout of glandular fever. Under the circumstances, though a point against City would represent cause for celebration, the manager will not be offered the benefit of the doubt indefinitely.

With a daunting trip to Newcastle beckoning on New Year's Eve and West Ham visiting West Yorkshire next Wednesday, Marsch could soon be back under intense scrutiny. Much may depend on the continued progress of his exciting young forwards Wilfried Gnonto and Crysencio Summerville; not to mention the outcome of Patrick Bamford's longstanding mission to recover the sort of fitness and form capable of transforming his side.

Given that Victor Orta, the director of football, is never enthusiastic about January spending and looming takeovers invariably inhibiting investment, Marsch is unlikely to have much transfer-market room for manoeuvre next month. Any available funds will be directed towards securing a left-back and, possibly, a central striker.

Perhaps hoping tactical tweaks can camouflage the shortfall, the manager has been experimenting with 4-3-3 in training. "I think 4-3-3 gives us a bit more flexibility, especially against the ball," says Marsch, previously a committed 4-2-3-1 advocate. "We can press differently, in ways where we can both attack and protect ourselves. And, depending on the opposition, 4-3-3 is easy to manipulate with small tactical subtleties.

"The group's togetherness has always been strong but I think we've made progress over the last few weeks." Leeds fans must trust he is right.

Norwich weigh up move for Martin after sacking Smith

Ben Fisher

Norwich have sacked Dean Smith as their manager, following a poor run of results and increasing anger from supporters.

On Boxing Day the club slipped to a third defeat in four Championship matches to leave Norwich fifth in the table but with only a three-point buffer to 16th. They have won just three of their past 13 matches, with defeat at 10-man Luton prompting the hierarchy to act.

Norwich are admirers of the Swansea head coach, Russell Martin, a former Norwich captain who has 18 months to run on his contract in Wales.

Having succeeded Daniel Farke, Smith failed to keep Norwich in the Premier League last season and was expected to challenge for automatic promotion this campaign. After a 2-1 defeat at Luton on Monday, Smith revealed he had told his family to stay away from games because of the personal abuse he was receiving at matches.

"This was a tough decision, but one that we felt was necessary to give ourselves the best possible chance of achieving our objective of promotion to the Premier League this season," the Norwich sporting director, Stuart Webber, said.

"With just under half of the season remaining and three consecutive home games on the horizon we now have a real opportunity to build some forward and positive momentum, both on and off the pitch."



Dean Smith leaves Norwich after just over a year in charge

Lampard challenges Everton to 'be braver' after Wolves defeat

Frank Lampard is well aware the Goodison Park effect can be both positive and negative but the Everton manager has urged discontented fans to keep faith with the players and what he is trying to coach them.

Having left the field at the interval with the score at 1-1 at home against Wolves to a ripple of boos, the frustration levels peaked deep into added time with the home side seemingly lacking the urgency for a winner. That prompted James Tarkowski to launch a ball upfield and, when Anthony Gordon lost control, a counter-attack left the exposed defence vulnerable and led to Rayan Aït-Nouri's winner.

The boos at the final whistle were long and loud as a sixth defeat in eight matches left supporters staring at another relegation battle just seven months after escaping the last one in the penultimate game of the season.

"The lads had all the right intentions so far that I'd love the crowd to stick with them," said Lampard, who saw Yerry Mina's early set-piece goal cancelled out by Daniel Podence midway through the first half.

"We saw what a positive it [Goodison Park] can be last year so let's not come away from that. I'm in the dressing room with them and I know they want to do the right thing.

"I'm not asking the players to play 100 passes in our own final third, but to be a bit braver on the ball. We have to take it on the chin. We are trying to improve and it will be baby steps."

Wolves took their own first steps towards salvation as the win, their first away from home since visiting Goodison in March, lifted them off the bottom of the table and within a point of West Ham and Everton.



▲ Frank Lampard's Everton are facing another relegation battle

Julen Lopetegui, the new manager, celebrated his first Premier League game with only the club's third victory of the season.

The former Spain coach hopes that can be the foundation for them to move up the table. He believes his squad are better than their league position.

"We tried to convince them that they are able to do better," Lopetegui said. "They have to believe. It's important that they have confidence. We have to improve.

"We have hard matches, the next is Manchester United, and I want to put the focus on the players that are here now." **PA Media**



Havertz shows Chelsea the way

Kai Havertz slides in to convert Raheem Sterling's cross and give the hosts the lead
JUSTIN SETTERFIELD/ GETTY IMAGES

Havertz and Mount strike early to get Chelsea back to winning ways

Chelsea	**2**
Havertz 16, Mount 24	
Bournemouth	**0**

Sam Dalling
Stamford Bridge

A home win in regulation this might have been. But victory against Bournemouth - and a comfortable one at that - was as welcome as it was necessary for Graham Potter.

First-half goals from the World Cup returnees Kai Havertz and Mason Mount made what could have been an awkward evening one of relief for the home side and, largely, satisfaction. But really Chelsea ought to have added more gloss.

The real kicker of the evening came when Reece James sustained what appeared to be a recurrence of the knee injury that caused him to miss the Qatar tournament.

This was not a result for Potter to get carried away with. But there can be genuine excitement at Raheem Sterling's showing. This was the player they bought. And while Chelsea will almost certainly seek at least temporary striking reinforcements in January, Havertz will take confidence from his goal and performance.

Gary O'Neil's Bournemouth side were outclassed. These are not nights on which their season will turn - but they barely landed a punch until the closing stages.

Given the length of their World Cup hiatus - 45 days have passed since Chelsea's last competitive fixture - it feels misleading to use that starting lineup as a frame of reference.

But the fact that Potter felt able to name just three of the 11 who began their defeat at Newcastle demonstrated the World Cup's impact on his selection. James, who was ruled out of England duty by injury, returned for the first time since mid-October, while Denis Zakaria, on loan from Juventus, made his league debut.



▲ *Graham Potter's Chelsea ended a run of three consecutive defeats*

Bournemouth had it easy by comparison, with just Kieffer Moore and Chris Mepham in Qatar. The blow of the latter missing out with illness was softened with Lloyd Kelly returning from a near four-month absence.

But while the Premier League has slept the Cherries have been active. O'Neil's interim managerial success earned him an 18-month contract, while he now ultimately reports to Billy Foley after the American's consortium completed its takeover.

If Chelsea were weakened by absent faces - among them Hakim Ziyech and Mateo Kovacic - it did not show. They settled confidently into their work, neat triangles of passing everywhere, with James's every touch cheered.

An early penalty appeal was waved away when Christian Pulisic burst into the area with Adam Smith clinging, albeit lightly, to his shirt. Pulisic stayed up to get his shot away, and was joined on his feet by Chelsea's entire bench. VAR said no. One of



those "anywhere else it's a foul" moments, and given Smith was not attempting to play the ball, it might have had serious consequences.

Fortunately, it soon became a moot point; Mount played in Sterling, whose inch-perfect first-time cross had Havertz sliding to poke past Mark Travers. Potter's hands shot from his pockets to pummel the air with gusto. Relief. Eight minutes later Chelsea doubled their lead. This time Havertz turned provider, recycling a loose ball to tee up Mount. On his 150th Chelsea start, his 20-yard low curler nestled in the corner.

The entirety of Stamford Bridge believed Chelsea had a third but Potter's celebration of Pulisic's finish quickly turned to remonstration when the referee Simon Hooper penalised the American.

The fruits of Bournemouth's sorry opening half were a Philip Billing free-kick that Kepa Arrizabalaga dealt with comfortably despite the slippery surface. Full marks for effort but they could barely get a touch.

James's combination with Sterling, who hugged the right touchline, was simply too much for them. Many present ought to have uttered the words "if only" as both tested Travers in first-half stoppage time.

Chelsea's performance level barely dropped after the match restarted, but sadly their hearts did. With eyes elsewhere, James went down, his face covered by his hands. A hush descended as James lay still. Everyone present knew what it meant. "Reece James, he's one of our own," echoed around the ground. The full-back at least headed down the tunnel unaided, but his expression was desolate.

Even without his right-flank partner, though, Sterling continued to dazzle. Direct, poised and electric, his mazy run deserved better than the finish an open-bodied Havertz offered. Then, perhaps inspired by Sterling, Mount flew forward, bringing a smart save from Travers.

Bournemouth caused a few late jitters caused largely by Chelsea's sloppiness. Arrizabalaga blocked the substitute Ryan Christie's shot, and several times Potter kicked the floor in frustration. Job done. On to the next one.

Chelsea
4-2-3-1
Arrizabalaga; James (Azpilicueta 53), Koulibaly, Silva, Cucurella; Zakaria (Gallagher 82), Jorginho; Sterling (Chalobah 88), Mount, Pulisic (Aubameyang 82); Havertz
Subs not used
Bettinelli, Hall, Chukwuemeka, Hutchinson, Humphreys

Bournemouth
3-5-2
Travers; Smith, Senesi, Kelly; Stacey (Anthony ht), Cook, Lerma, Billing (Christie 66), Zemura; Solanke, Moore (Dembélé 85)
Subs not used
Plain, Stephens, Marcondes, Rothwell, Lowe, Pearson, Anthony

Referee Simon Hooper **Attendance** 40,046

How they stand

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Arsenal	15	13	1	1	36	12	+24	40
Newcastle	16	9	6	1	32	11	+21	33
Man City	14	10	2	2	40	14	+26	32
Tottenham	16	9	3	4	33	23	+10	30
Man Utd*	14	8	2	4	20	20	0	26
Liverpool	15	7	4	4	31	18	+13	25
Brighton	15	7	3	5	26	20	+6	24
Chelsea	15	7	3	5	19	17	+2	24
Fulham	16	6	4	6	27	26	+1	22
Brentford	16	4	8	4	25	27	-2	20
Crystal Palace	15	5	4	6	15	21	-6	19
Aston Villa	16	5	3	8	17	25	-8	18
Leicester	16	5	2	9	25	28	-3	17
Bournemouth	16	4	4	8	18	34	-16	16
Leeds	14	4	3	7	22	26	-4	15
West Ham	16	4	2	10	13	20	-7	14
Everton	16	3	5	8	12	19	-7	14
Wolves	16	3	4	9	10	25	-15	13
Nottm Forest*	15	3	4	8	11	30	-19	13
Southampton	16	3	3	10	14	30	-16	12

*not including last night's match

Late sport

You may notice that due to ongoing production issues beyond our control your Guardian sport section does not include some coverage of late-night sport. Thank you for your patience – we hope to restore our normal service very soon, but in the meantime you can always find the most up-to-date coverage on our award-winning sport website
theguardian.com/sport

David Squires on ... his review of football in 2022, as told in 27 objects



David Squires archive **Peruse our resident cartoonist's previous work at**
theguardian.com/profile/david-squires

High jump
The Two Amigos storms to Welsh Grand National glory

Page 29 →



Magic moments
Messi leads way in our football highlights of the year

Page 28 →





Mount hands Potter welcome Christmas present

Chelsea	Bournemouth
2	0

Mason Mount is congratulated by his teammates after scoring Chelsea's second goal

Match report *Page 32* →

ANDREW FOSKER/SHUTTERSTOCK

United likely only to sign striker on loan in January

Jamie Jackson

Manchester United are more likely to sign a striker on loan rather than a permanent deal in the January window, with the focus on the summer market, as is the club's usual policy.

The news comes after Liverpool reached an agreement with PSV to sign Cody Gakpo for an initial £37m next month, the Dutch forward having been under consideration by the United manager, Erik ten Hag, as a potential replacement for Cristiano Ronaldo, who left the club during the World Cup.

It is understood that one option United explored regarding Gakpo was a payment for a loan plus a commitment to purchase the player in the summer, but it was not as attractive to PSV as Liverpool's willingness to buy him outright. Ronaldo's exit means United have saved around £10m in the wages that would have been paid to the Portuguese for the budget to recruit a forward. But finance for any fresh signing remains severely limited at the club with the owners, the Glazers, having served notice it is for sale if a suitable offer is received.

While the fee for Gakpo, which could rise to £50m, might have been countenanced by United, the club did not make a firm offer, allowing Liverpool to move in quickly for his signature. Ten Hag needs to add a proven goalscorer to his squad, United having scored only 20 times in the Premier League. Marcus Rashford is their top scorer with four goals.

While Ten Hag and John Murtough, United's football director, continue to assess striking options for possible recruitment in the winter window, any new addition is expected to be temporary rather than a major long-term signing, with the £230m spent last summer.

The club have all but ruled out a renewed effort to sign the Bologna forward Marko Arnautovic, who Ten Hag assessed in the summer.



▲ *Cody Gakpo has joined Liverpool from PSG for an initial fee of £37m*

'We have to restart'
Guardiola fears date at Leeds before City's 'terrible' January

Jamie Jackson

Pep Guardiola has admitted concern about Manchester City's defending before the World Cup break, with the manager warning they cannot lose any more ground on Arsenal ahead of their "terrible" January schedule.

City lost 2-1 at home against Brentford on 12 November in their final Premier League match before the World Cup and, before the game at Leeds today, Guardiola admitted his team could "not control" Ivan Toney, who scored both Bees goals last month.

Arsenal's win against West Ham on Boxing Day has given Mikel Arteta's side a seven-point lead at the top of the table over second-placed Newcastle, but City can retake that place and reduce the lead to five points if they beat Leeds.



▲ *Pep Guardiola has urged City to maintain their hunt of Arsenal*

Guardiola said: "Against Brentford, when you [have to] play 10 balls against Toney, it is difficult to win the game – we cannot control the long balls, we cannot control the transitions and we were [in trouble].

"I would have preferred another opponent than Leeds at this moment after the World Cup. They don't give you time to think and you have to be precise. After our defeat against Brentford, and with how strong Arsenal are, as well as the opponents who [can] come from behind, we have to be alert and careful, because if the distance is bigger it will be so difficult to catch them."

Guardiola was happier with City's defending last week in the 3-2 win against Liverpool in the Carabao Cup. "You cannot think against Liverpool you are not going to concede chances – in the transitions they are a fantastic team. I don't think there is a team in the world I am [more impressed with]."

After Leeds, City host Everton on New Year's Eve, before playing six games next month. On 5 January they visit Chelsea before hosting the same opposition in the FA Cup third round on 8 January. Then there is a visit to Southampton in the Carabao Cup (10 January), and three league games – the Manchester derby (14 January) and home games against Tottenham (19 January) and Wolves (22 January).

Guardiola said: "Our schedule in January is terrible in terms of amount of games and quality of the opponents. We have to restart. This is what we have done against Liverpool and hopefully we can continue."

Marsch fears Haaland *Page 31* →

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The Guardian **Wednesday 28 December 2022**

Journal

Opinion and ideas

Sunak will find that stability is not enough to resist Labour

Henry Hill

On Christmas Day, Rishi Sunak marked his 62nd day as prime minister, far surpassing Liz Truss's time in office. A trifling achievement, by any measure. But after the annus horribilis that was 2022, the Conservatives are not really in a position to turn their noses up at small victories. And the prime minister will, broadly, have achieved what he set out to do when Conservative MPs finally crowned him in October 2022: steadied the ship. Westminster politics seems stable, even boring; the financial markets are no longer running riot; even the opinion polls are starting to narrow, if you squint at them.

So far, so good. But the problem with restoring normal service is that normal expectations will soon follow. A grateful nation is not going to hand the Conservative party a historic fifth term merely because it has finally stopped electing chaos spirits to lead it. To win the next election, Sunak needs to give sceptical voters a solid reason to put their cross in the Tory box. It is not yet clear that he or his party are up to it.

In fairness to the prime minister, he starts in an extraordinarily difficult position - not least because he inherited much of his cabinet, including his chancellor. Even without the bonfire of the Truss premiership, it is difficult to change course and seize the initiative in the second half of a parliament. Even if he had a new legislative programme, there is neither the time nor the timetable space for one.

And he doesn't have one; there has never been a "Sunakism". The policy agenda he offered in the summer's leadership election was rejected by the party membership, and then jettisoned in October under the cover of cleaning up after his predecessor. While "not being Truss" will not be enough to win an election, it is pretty much the whole basis on which he finally won the leadership. Tory MPs don't feel that in choosing him they have had to commit to a programme; there is no tacit acceptance of the need to fight unpopular battles.

As a result, the handsome Commons majority Sunak commands on paper is largely illusory. After 12 years in power, the parliamentary party is divided along so many axes that there will probably be sufficient Tory rebels to sink anything of consequence, even if the government had the space to bring it forward.

Leadership does matter. Sunak could have adapted to these circumstances, taking Labour up on its offer of support to pass the levelling up and regeneration bill, and building alliances on a case-by-case basis to get important legislation through. But he didn't. Instead, ministers capitulated to the most shortsighted and self-destructive coalition of Conservative backbenchers in recent memory. The illusion of unity was maintained, but only at the expense of actually governing. The

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Henry Hill *is deputy editor of Conservative Home*

Sunak will find that stability is not enough to resist Labour

Henry Hill

← *Continued from front*

next election is most likely somewhere between 18 months and two years away. That is not a lot of time to get anything done. But it is a very long time to do nothing.

Even Tories sympathetic to Sunak sometimes worry that his political judgment has not yet been tested. Whatever his strengths, he entered No 11 because he would accept terms Sajid Javid would not, and No 10 (at the second time of knocking) because Truss set the public finances on fire. Meanwhile, his Covid support measures, which made him at one point the most popular politician in the country and the prime minister's heir apparent, were a response to an emergency and cut across his hawkish fiscal instincts.

But even a politician perfectly suited to the moment would struggle with the position he has inherited. After 12 years, the Tories seem intellectually adrift. They have changed horses four times since 2015, and, while at the time those looked like remarkable acts of renewal, the cumulative effect is confusion. While good work has been done on individual policy issues, there is no clear ideological line running from 2010 to now. Many Conservative activists are frustrated that the party, having been in power almost as long as New Labour was, has not transformed the country the way that Tony Blair or Margaret Thatcher did.

Hence the absurdity of Boris Johnson loyalists founding a new grassroots movement to protest at the capture of the party by "leftwingers". The specific charge is ridiculous - Sunak is a conventionally rightwing politician by any sane measure - but the frustration speaks to a broader truth about the Tories' apparent inability to wield power effectively.

And while the cabinet would scarcely admit to sharing those feelings, the party's political messaging tacitly concedes it. Nadhim Zahawi tries to pin the blame for the rail strikes on Labour; backbench MPs describe them as "a vision of Labour's Britain"; still more make heroic efforts to reclaim the "chaos with Ed Miliband" meme, speculating about how bad things would have been had Cameron not prevailed in 2010. It's not exactly "It's morning again in America", the slogan Ronald Reagan used to secure his landslide second term in 1984. It's a bad sign when a party, after so long in office, prefers to try to run an oppositional campaign against an imaginary government, rather than on its own record.

That leaves two big questions for Sunak. The first is whether he can, against the odds, deliver a fifth term of Conservative government. The second is whether, if he does, he can explain to the nation - and his restive activists - what it's actually for. If not, even his leadership could yet prove precarious. The basis for his support, like Johnson's, is transactional. His offer, unlike Johnson's, is not big-picture thinking and big wins but basic political competence - less Steve Jobs and more John J Ray III, the man installed as CEO of corporate catastrophes such as Enron and FTX to oversee their bankruptcy proceedings. But Ray answers only to the courts and the creditors, not the people who handpicked and cheered on the "visionary" leaders whose messes he has to clean up. The prime minister is not so fortunate.

So if he can't close the gap with Labour - if "red wall" MPs keep giving gloomy quotes about how they all expect to lose their seats - what is to stop his party trying to roll the dice one last time? It sounds ridiculous. It would be ridiculous. But that doesn't mean it won't happen. A year is a long time in local election routs and byelection humiliations. Regicide, once made a habit, may be hard to quit. Johnson's ultras await the slightest excuse to raise again the ragged standard of their prince over the water. If they do, the rest of the party must hope that by then the cabinet has produced yet another break-glass-in-case-of-emergency candidate who could stop him. There is no stand-out candidate so far.

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Politics

The radical right has breached the cordon sanitaire of Europe

Over the Christmas holidays, the Guardian leader column will examine how the forces unleashed by 2022 will continue to shape the world ahead. Today we look at the creeping normalisation of illiberal politics

The legacy of a seismic political autumn is beginning to unfold. Just before politics adjourned for the Christmas break, the migration minister in Sweden's new rightwing government announced a plan to make it easier to revoke residence permits for immigrants. Maria Malmer Stenergard belongs to the centre-right Moderate party, but at her side during the press conference was Henrik Vinge, the deputy leader of the Sweden Democrats.

A radical-right party that originated in fringe neo-Nazi movements, the Sweden Democrats are not part of the governing coalition. In fact, until the landmark election in September, when the party finished second, it had been judged beyond the pale and excluded from power. Technically that remains the case. But - as Mr Vinge's presence testified - the reality is very different. Dependent on the Sweden Democrats' support to stay in office, the prime minister, Ulf Kristersson, allows it to exert significant influence, particularly on favourite topics such as migration and crime.

In consensual Sweden then, the cordon sanitaire around the radical right has been discreetly lowered. In Rome, 1,500 miles to the south, a still more startling and far-reaching process of political detoxification has taken place. Four years ago, Giorgia Meloni was a firebrand leader of a party with neo-fascist roots, which scored 4% at the 2018 elections. Following Italy's poll in the autumn, which followed hard on the heels of Sweden's, she is the country's prime minister. Her radical-right coalition also contains Matteo Salvini and his anti-immigration League party.

In October, Ms Meloni joined her close political ally in Hungary, Viktor Orbán (emphatically re-elected last spring), and Poland's prime minister, Mateusz Morawiecki, to speak at a rally organised by Vox - a hardline Spanish nationalist party. "Long live the Europe of patriots," said Ms Meloni in a video message. Polls suggest Vox, founded in 2013, could - like the Sweden Democrats - land a kingmaker role at elections next year.

Creeping normalisation

Once shunned and confined to the periphery of postwar European politics, radical-right movements have thus penetrated the political mainstream. In France, the idea of the cordon sanitaire was conceived to deal with the rise of the Vichy apologist Jean-Marie Le Pen. His daughter, Marine, has effectively broken through it, as she prepares to contest a third presidential election when Emmanuel Macron steps down. A poll this month for Le Monde found that 48% considered Le Pen and her party to represent a "patriotic right", compared with 36% who associated her with the "nationalist and xenophobic right". The survey also found that Rassemblement National's substantial presence in the French Assembly, following last spring's election, means that it is seen by most voters as the main opposition to Mr Macron.

Normalisation has been a decade-long process. The crash, the eurozone debt crisis and the misguided austerity policies that followed inculcated anti-elite sentiment, allowing the radical right a hearing. Anti-lockdown sentiment and conspiracy theorising during the pandemic have offered further opportunities. But it is, above all, on the issue of migration that views once considered extreme are now dictating the terms of mainstream debate.

For it is not only in Ms Meloni's Italy, or Mr Orbán's Hungary, that "great replacement" rhetoric is determining policy towards migration from Africa, Asia and the Middle East. Denmark's Social Democrats regained power in 2019 by aping the approach of the populist, anti-immigrant Danish People's party. Under the leadership of the prime minister, Mette Frederiksen - who has just won a second term - the Social Democrats have backed a cap on non-western immigration, and in 2021 Denmark became the first European country to try to send refugees back to Syria.

On economic matters, the outlook is less bleak. In the context of an energy and cost of living crisis, access to power has been accompanied by a cautious moderation of tone. As Britain rues the chaotic consequences of its Brexit referendum, for example, leaving the EU no longer features in the radical-right playbook. Ms Meloni knows that she must ensure Italy's access to €200bn of EU recovery fund money, and has taken care to operate within the policy guardrails established by her technocratic predecessor, Mario Draghi. A radical tax-cutting programme has been scaled back. On Ukraine, Ms Meloni has remained in lockstep with Brussels and Washington.

Brussels fights back

Money has also talked in the east, where Poland and Hungary have played cat-and-mouse games with the EU as it seeks to impose rule of law and anti-corruption norms. Amid acute financial pressures and domestic discontent, this month Warsaw signed up to judicial reforms required by Brussels in order to access €34bn in post-pandemic funding. Faced with member states that delight in rejecting its values and norms, the EU is increasingly prepared to use financial firepower to fight back.

But as the future of Europe is defined in a volatile and increasingly multipolar world, weaponising fiscal largesse may not be enough. On issues such as LGBT and minority rights, abortion, race and immigration, the empowered nationalist right will seek to undermine liberal norms in the name of an authoritarian worldview that has little interest in universal rights. For the EU, which remains an essentially technocratic organisation, this is treacherous terrain. In a new book entitled Europe's Coming of Age, a former president of the European Commission, Loukas Tsoukalis, notes that, as essentially bureaucratic organisations, "Brussels institutions are never comfortable dealing with identity and cultural issues". The same could be said of the European centre-left, which has been slow to grasp the resentments exploited and then channelled into culture wars by formerly fringe populists.

Europe's population is ageing and shrinking as a result of declining birthrates, and migrant labour will become an economic necessity in the decades ahead. Among the young, liberal attitudes on social questions are deeply entrenched and will ultimately shape the future. But an illiberal counterinsurgency, with roots in once-ostracised political traditions, has installed itself at the heart of the European body politic. In 2023 and beyond, progressive forces must find ways to understand its appeal more deeply and offer different, better solutions. Working towards a humane, fair and functioning Europe-wide policy on refugees and migration would be a start.

I fitted three wood-burning stoves at home, to my shame

George Monbiot

It's shame that has stopped me writing about it before. The shame of failing to think for myself and see the bigger picture, which is more or less my job description. Instead, I followed the crowd. In 2008 I was refitting my house. It was a century old and poorly built. The toughest issue was heating. The technology that had seemed to show most promise a few years before - domestic fuel cells - hadn't materialised. Domestic heat pumps (which are now more accessible) were extremely expensive and scarcely deployed in the UK. That left only two options: gas or wood. I wanted to unhook myself from fossil fuels. So I went with wood.

At some expense, I fitted three wood burners and the steel flues required to remove the smoke. I would buy the wood locally, from a contractor I knew.

I began to doubt my choice when the first load arrived. It consisted of the knotty, lichen-encrusted branches of what must have once been a venerable oak. I later heard that, as the price of firewood had risen, some contractors employed to keep the roads clear had been widening their definition of unsafe trees, and cutting more zealously. So rather than using trees that would have been felled anyway, I might have been commissioning ecological destruction.

Then I found that the stoves, when I opened them, made me cough, and seemed to exacerbate my asthma. Worse, when I shut down a stove to trickle some heat through the house at night, the chimney released a cloud of black smoke and soot. I knew it couldn't be healthy, but imagined it was less harmful than the smoke from fossil fuels, especially car engines.

I now know that I couldn't have been more wrong. Wood smoke is astonishingly harmful. Though only 8% of households in the UK (mostly wealthy ones) have a wood-burning stove, they release more small particulates (the most dangerous pollutants) than all the vehicles on the road. Even a modern, approved, "eco-friendly" wood burner produces 750 times as many fine particulates as a heavy goods vehicle.

We have some figures for the deaths believed to be caused by outdoor air pollution: between 26,000 and 38,000 a year in England. But we have no data on the impact of indoor air pollution, of which wood-burning stoves, in the homes that have them, are by far the biggest source. Every time you open the stove door to refuel, your home is flooded with tiny particulates, accompanied by other toxins, including benzene, formaldehyde and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, pushing pollution levels way above World Health Organization guidelines.

These poisons can affect every organ in the body. They're associated with a wide range of cancers, heart and lung disease, strokes, dementia and the loss of intelligence. They age your skin and damage your liver. They harm foetuses in the womb and children's development. It's especially paradoxical to find wood burners in the homes of people who buy only organic products, to reduce the chemical load on their bodies. Burning wood is consistent with the "naturalness" of this approach, but what we deem to be "natural" (a term we often use to mean "old") is not always best.

What I should have done, as I slowly became aware of the facts, was to write about it. But that would have meant admitting to myself what an expensively bad decision I had made. Instead, while I lived in that house for the following four years, I quietly froze, scarcely using either the stoves or the old gas central heating system. I am now convinced that the sale of wood-burning stoves and pellet boilers should be banned, and their use phased out (with help for the very few people who don't have an alternative source of heating). Let's face it, if wood burning were mostly a working-class habit, it would probably have been banned already.

Today, it would be an easier decision to make. For the same budget I could buy an air-source heat pump. But what would I have done in 2008, knowing what I now know? There were no good options. But the better choice, I think, would have been to install a highly efficient gas boiler and use it as sparingly as possible.

Even fossil fuels, terrible as their impact is, are less damaging than the public health disaster to which I contributed, and to which other well-meaning people still contribute. We have a duty, to ourselves and others, to acknowledge our mistakes.



PHOTOGRAPH: ROLF BRUDERER/GETTY

We wilfully ignore today's most deadly global conflict

Magdalene Abraha

A war is raging that has cost up to 600,000 lives. Its victims have borne witness to shocking human rights abuses and, tragically, civilians have been deliberately targeted. Tens of thousands of women have been raped. It has lasted two years and is happening today, yet the chances are you don't even know where it is. Though it is far deadlier than the war in Ukraine, the western media have mostly ignored it.

On 4 November 2020, when Ethiopia's prime minister, Abiy Ahmed, a Nobel Peace prize winner, announced a military offensive in the disputed territory of Tigray, it was difficult to imagine how catastrophic it would become. A population of more than 6 million people, under a government blockade, has been pushed towards mass starvation - with young children dying of acute malnutrition. Tigray has become a centre of weaponised rape and an internet blackout that has added to the psychological torture faced by victims, and by families such as mine desperate to hear from our loved ones.

Before the war, Tigray was home to 47 hospitals, 224 health centres and 269 functional ambulances; today more than 80% of the hospitals have been damaged or destroyed at the hands of Ethiopian and Eritrean soldiers, and ambulance services are no more. The statistics and the scale of human suffering mean the eyes of the world should be on Tigray, yet two years later it feels as though no one is watching.

My family are from Tigray, and we have had limited communication with our relatives since the war began. The last I heard from my aunt was a voice note in March saying they had run out of money and medication, and things were dire. We haven't heard from her since. With limited communication in some regions, some Tigrayans living abroad have only learned of the loss of their loved ones after more than a year. Many Tigrayans in the diaspora are now resigned to the fact that when communication lines are fully restored, they will probably learn of more loss and suffering.

On 2 November this year there were muted celebrations as a peace deal was signed by the warring parties. Some hoped this could be the first step towards justice and a lasting peace. Yet weeks later came reports of Eritrean troops looting towns, and displacing, arresting and killing civilians in Tigray. It is still uncertain how the perpetrators of civilian abuses will be effectively investigated and brought to justice - especially as the abuses are continuing.

The question remains: how did the international community ignore hundreds of thousands of people dying? And what does it mean that such abuses of justice are allowed to occur? When all is said and done, our global consciences must reckon with the fact that, while this human bloodbath happened, we chose not to watch.

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Magdalene Abraha *is a writer and publisher based in London*



The theatre that first inspired me – and let me share my grief

Richard E Grant

When I was 12 years old, in 1969, my father decided that as Swaziland (now Eswatini) had only one cinema, one amateur theatre club and no television, I would benefit from an injection of culture in the northern hemisphere. We flew to London and the culture shock was immediate and unforgettable. Emerging from Piccadilly Circus tube station, I saw the Eros fountain crowded with hippies, smelling strongly of patchouli oil. Walking through Soho and Carnaby Street, I saw miniskirted women with see-through blouses. Until then, the only naked adults I'd ever seen were in National Geographic magazine. We went to the Shaftesbury theatre to see the musical Hair, which featured the entire cast standing stark naked for a few seconds, just before the interval. In other words, I got to see Elaine Paige's front bum. (We've since become friends and I can officially say that I've never seen it since.)

Then it was off to see Ginger Rogers in Mame at the Theatre Royal on Drury Lane, which featured a 15-year-old Gary Warren playing her nephew, a year before he starred in The Railway Children. It was all topped off by watching Adrian Hall and Heather Ripley on screen as the Potts siblings in Chitty Chitty Bang Bang.

My father insisted that we go to the Palladium no matter who was performing as, according to him, it was the landmark theatre in London. Which is how we got to see the legendary Max Bygraves. I'd never heard of him, but his easygoing charm and rapport with the audience was extraordinary. He did impressions, jokes and sang his signature hit Tulips from Amsterdam, with the entire audience singing along to the chorus. The foyer had photos of the legendary singers who had performed there, including Judy Garland and Frank Sinatra.

My fiercely-held secret dream of becoming an actor was fired up by seeing all these shows and films. However, I never once considered I would find myself on the Palladium stage. So when producer Alex Fane suggested booking the theatre this year for my one-man show, A Pocketful of Happiness, based on my memoir, I was flabbergasted.

He calmly countered my panic-stricken "But it's over 2,000 seats, Alex. I'll never be able to fill it," with a panto chorus of "Oh, but you will!"

His faith prevailed, and the performance on Sunday 30 October was jam-packed. The acoustics were perfect and even with so many people, it felt intimate. Despite the profound grief I've felt since my wife died last year, performing my tribute to her and celebrating our lives together in this iconic venue felt truly extraordinary.

It's one thing to dream of becoming an actor having grown up in one of the smallest countries in the southern hemisphere, but another thing entirely to have that fantasy become a reality, complete with standing ovation. Pocketfuls of happiness, beyond measure.

Snapshot of 2022

What was the image on your phone that defined 2022? Actor Richard E Grant makes his choice. His memoir, A Pocketful of Happiness, is out now



Richard E Grant's photo of the London Palladium

Letters

Established 1906

Country diary

Sandy, Bedfordshire

An unequal dogfight is taking place over open country at the foot of the ridge. In these midair tussles between a red kite and a carrion crow, the heavyweight never wins. The kite offers no defence against its light, agile opponent, behaving as if it were an unresisting pin cushion. The twisting crow harries the kite persistently, jabbing at wings, back and tail. Eventually, the battered bird tires of its beating and turns with the wind in its wings to be borne well away. And then it comes back.

The grass track we follow is on a gentle curve, so there comes a reveal when a kite appears on the path ahead, stood in the middle with its back to me, leaning forward. A crow flies down, dive-bombing, trying to dislodge it. This is not the same kite as before - now hanging low immediately over us - nor is it the same crow. What is the attraction that has drawn four intelligent and highly observant birds to prize this spot?

All kites and crows have cleared away by the time we catch up with a halo of body feathers in cinnamon, chestnut and black. A cock pheasant lying in the centre of this feather drift looks immaculate, but for the fact that his breast has been plucked and pulled open, showing bright, pig-pink flesh.

Over the last few weeks, we have seen dead swans and geese strewn around the local lakes and rivers, all most likely victims of bird flu. Has this bird succumbed too, or was it shot?

We continue our there-and-back walk. By the time we return about 20 minutes later, others have joined the scavenging party. A buzzard affects a low glide, before settling in a tree to weigh up its chances. A magpie crosses the path right to left, left to right. When we draw close, the birds scatter.

The downed pheasant now looks like the Christmas turkey after Boxing Day, ribs prised apart and a flat plate of bone, its keeled sternum, completely stripped of meat. Past the carcass we go, leaving the watchful birds behind us to fight it out.

Derek Niemann



ILLUSTRATION: CLIFFORD HARPER

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Keeping faith with an under-fire Christianity

I usually respect and agree with what Polly Toynbee writes, but I was sorry about the tone of her article (Now is the time for good cheer - and to ease the grip of religion, 23 December). She is fully entitled to argue her humanist views, but I would hope for a bit of respect for people of faith, whether Christian or other. Those of us who are believers deeply regret that Christianity and other faiths have caused or contributed to many conflicts and harms. However, we are entitled to a fair hearing and not to be abruptly dismissed as having archaic beliefs, damaging traditions and unreason.

It is a gross distortion to describe Christianity as a faith that imposes perpetual guilt, believing in a God who inflicts random horrors on his people while demanding praise, thanks and glorification. At its best, Christianity is an exploration of creation, of human meaning and fulfilment, and of what constitutes good community and society.

Rev Stuart Nattrass
Pinner, London

● It may surprise humanists to know that, as a vicar in the Church of England, my job largely comprises visiting people who are ill and lonely, coordinating provision of food for a homeless shelter, running music clubs for children in our local school and doing my best to keep several buildings of importance to national heritage in good shape. And that's before I've started planning and delivering any of that evil, misguided "religion" - which at this time of the year at least is still surprisingly popular. Here we've counted well over a thousand people visiting to hear a message of hope, with music and liturgy that touches the poetry of the soul in a way that the takes us beyond humanity (and dare I say, cold, old, rational humanism).

So, before you knock it, maybe give church a try. It might surprise you that (a) normal people go, (b) we're not all plotting the downfall of humanity, and (c) some of us even read the Guardian.

Rev James Gilder
Wanstead, London

● Most of the criticisms that Polly Toynbee levels against Christianity have merit. Like every single culture and religion throughout history, Christianity has a chequered and, at points, grim history and legacy. However, many of us consider ourselves to be both Christian and humanist (also cherishing science, wherever it takes us). Many of her critiques resonate with us, yet we have found that they have forced us to scrutinise our beliefs rather than toss them out wholesale. This kind of journey has taken us to a place where unknowing, compassion and a welcome to the other have been recovered. These are attitudes that the ancient Christmas story, told well, embodies (despite the dissonances of some of the 19th-century carols Polly quotes).

Weary polemics only deepen cultural divides, justify us in our respective fundamentalisms and obscure the common ground that we might share.

I long for Polly and others like her to countenance the possibility of creative conversation between atheists and people of faith. It might actually surprise us all.

Rev Kenneth Cross
Minehead, Somerset

● I have to applaud Polly Toynbee's article. It was as if she and I had sat down and talked it over, as everything she wrote is how I have felt for many years but never managed to articulate so eloquently. I think I will keep a copy and simply ask people to read it if they query my feelings about Christmas and Christianity. The phrase "cultural Christian" is to be my stock answer from now on.

Mandi Horwood
Stroud, Gloucestershire

2 Tone empowered us during apartheid

Pauline Black's article about Terry Hall and the 2 Tone movement brought back a lot of memories (Terry Hall's vision of unity still resonates, 21 December). I was too young to have experienced the movement, nor did I live in the UK, nor did I experience poverty. But in 1988, when I started actively listening to the Specials (I grew up with their music, but there was this magic moment when they reached my heart), I lived in a country bordering apartheid South Africa. My best friend was black, I was white. While such friendships should be normal everywhere, they weren't in that time and place - not even in our multicultural, international schools. Everyone stuck to their own communities.

We questioned this as young teenagers, as we knew how similar we were, sharing experiences, laughter, tears and music. But people looked at us and did not see this, simply because of our skin colour, and belittled our friendship. In South Africa, we couldn't share hotels or visit places together. We hated this system. Through music, mainly the Specials, we discovered that we were normal and right. We listened to the Specials day in, day out - and later to Fun Boy Three, the Special AKA, and other 2 Tone bands such as the Selecter and the Beat.

They empowered us; they normalised our friendship - the bands sang about what we experienced, and they looked like us. We sang their songs in public and we dressed up in black and white just to make our point even more obvious. Music can do more than most can imagine, but only if it is sincere. The 2 Tone movement felt like that to us. People like Terry Hall, Jerry Dammers, Pauline Black and Neville Staple gave us normality and showed us a better world. Thank you to all of them.

Cornelia Köhler
Ammerbuch, Germany

Did your diarist get the big calls right?

In his very interesting piece on redwings' protectionism towards their most precious berries (Country diary, 22 December), Paul Evans describes their call as a "scratchy *shakshakshakshak*". But this call is surely that of the other winter thrush, the fieldfare, possibly feeding nearby? I've never heard a harsh sound from a redwing in years of observation.

Redwings are much quieter, with only the well-known thin, hissing *seeep* sound, especially in flight, and an occasional soft chirp or *pip*, which you can only hear if nearby. A harsh *chakking* call, often spelt *chack* or *cha-cha-cha-chack* in field guides, is the quintessential fieldfare call.

But thanks to Paul for some fascinating insights into the attractions of berries after they've been frozen, for birds and humans too.

Jayne Lee Wilson
Liverpool

Bin the bread sauce

Bread sauce (Letters, 26 December) should be consigned to the bin alongside spotted dick and bread and butter pudding. And as for bread sauce sandwiches - yuck. They all remind me of my wartime school meals in Sheffield together with pearl barley in stews, which I still cannot eat 80 years on. But at least we didn't have food banks, even in those poverty ridden days.

Trevor Marshall
Trimingham, Norfolk

Corrections and clarifications

● The readers' editor's office is closed over the holiday period and will reopen on Tuesday 3 January. Correction requests, or queries about editorial accuracy and standards, may still be sent by email to guardian.readers@theguardian.com or by post to: The readers' editor, Kings Place, 90 York Way, London N1 9GU

The Lost King's fictional thread

Like James Derounian (Guardian readers' best films of 2022, theguardian.com, 22 December), I enjoyed The Lost King - about the search for Richard III's remains - as an entertaining story of fulfilment achieved against the odds. Contrary to movie PR, however, its key thread is fiction: the "bubble of academic arrogance" is a fantasy of the film's anti-intellectual agenda. The actual archaeological project was an exemplary case of university archaeologists and administrators listening to and working with an amateur historian.

Mike Pitts
Editor, British Archaeology

● The affordance theory of gender disparity in domestic labour (Report, 23 December) ignores a more fundamental truth discovered by my son around 1990 from his experiences of shared student houses. It was simply that everyone living in a house is certain that they do more washing up than anyone else living there.

Juliet Cairns
Blackheath, London

● That philosophers have come up with an "affordance theory" to explain why women clean and men don't notice is yet another example of philosophers proving to be surplus to society's requirements.

Keith Barnes
Frome, Somerset

● After a miserable weekend with man flu, I was delighted to see the swift return of brief letters to raise my spirits, after last week's two-day hiatus. I hope to be back doing the household chores by midweek while my wife sorts out an ongoing issue with our bilge pump.

Ian Grieve
Gordon Bennett, Llangollen canal

● My comfy Crocs are now in the bin (Comfy shoes and smart suiting emerge as top buys, 26 December). I had stepped out of the back door in them on to black ice - not a good combination. Only a bang on the head, and there are nurses in the family, so no need for A&E.

Helen Evans
Ruthin, Denbighshire



Gabrielle Beaumont

British television director who made her mark with US series such as The Waltons and Dynasty

Gabrielle Beaumont, who has died of cancer aged 80, was a British television director who blazed a trail for women in Hollywood. She worked on worldwide hits such as M*A*S*H and The Waltons, and was the first woman to direct an episode of a Star Trek series. In the UK her work included the drama Riders (1993), based on the raunchy Jilly Cooper novel.

Beaumont turned up in Los Angeles in 1980 with cans of film from a horror movie she had just directed, The Godsend, and met the producer Aaron Spelling. Not interested in her film, Spelling – with the industry then under pressure to employ more female directors – simply asked her: "Can you goddamn direct?" Her reply came: "Goddamn yes!" Spelling assigned her to an episode in that year's series of Vega$, set among the desert city's colourful casinos and starring Robert Urich as a Vietnam veteran-turned-private eye.

The following year, the gloss and glitz continued as Beaumont worked on Dynasty, Spelling's answer to Dallas, featuring another oil-rich family, headed by Blake Carrington (played by John Forsythe), and set in Denver, Colorado. When she joined towards the end of that first series, Dynasty was only just beginning to catch on with viewers. For the second run (1981-82), she suggested her friend Joan Collins for the role of Alexis, Blake's ex-wife, and was instrumental in turning the soap around.

Beaumont in 1983. At the beginning of the decade, she was among fewer than 100 professional female directors in the US. Right, Dynasty, 1986, starring Joan Collins, right, and Linda Evans
CLIVE LIMPKIN/ANL/SHUTTERSTOCK; ABC/GETTY IMAGES

In 1989, she directed Star Trek: The Next Generation, the first live-action sequel to the 1960s sci-fi series. Later, she worked on episodes of the Star Trek series Deep Space Nine (in 1997) and Voyager (in 2000).

At the beginning of the 1980s, Beaumont was among fewer than 100 professional female directors in the US, whereas by the end of the decade there were about 500.

She was sometimes accused by TV critics of lacking subtlety, but like Spelling she knew how to make dramas for mass audiences. She was back in Britain to direct the miniseries Riders, billed in TV Times magazine as a "sex sizzler", and took a cameo acting role in it as Lady Roxborough.

She later caused controversy with the drama Diana: A Tribute to the People's Princess (1998), which she wrote and directed as a TV movie, broadcast eight months after the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. It focused on the last year of Diana's life, including her final



"Obviously, we do not know what was said between Diana and Dodi, so we were trying to get inside their heads

weeks with Dodi Fayed. Lawyers for the princess's family failed to block its worldwide screening and reviewers variously described the production as "tacky" and a "mixture of Mills & Boon and Hollywoodese". Beaumont defended the production, saying: "Obviously, we do not know what was said between Diana and Dodi, so we were trying to get inside their heads to see how they ticked."

Gabrielle was born in Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, to Diana Beaumont, an actor, and her husband, Gabriel Toyne, an actor-manager and fight arranger. The author Daphne du Maurier was Diana's cousin. Taking her mother's maiden name on leaving Our Lady of Sion school, in Notting Hill, London, Gabrielle had a short acting career in productions such as Counterpoint, a triple bill including the stage premiere of Harold Pinter's play A Night Out (Comedy theatre, 1961). Then, as assistant stage manager, she worked on the Lionel Bart musical Blitz! (Adelphi theatre, 1962).

She joined BBC television in 1964 as a production assistant but soon moved into the film industry. After producing two movies, The Johnstown Monster and The Corpse (both 1971), she went to the ITV company Thames Television to direct daytime programmes – the chat series Good Afternoon! from 1973 to 1976, the serials Marked Personal in 1974, Couples in 1975 and Rooms in 1977, and the preschool show Rainbow between 1978 and 1980. She also directed The Tomorrow People during 1978. Two years later, Beaumont joined London Independent Television, a consortium led by the TV presenter Hughie Green that failed in a bid for both of the capital's ITV franchises.

Her early work in the US included episodes of M*A*S*H, The Waltons and the Dallas soap spin-off Knots Landing (all 1981), as well as that year's TV movie Death of a Centerfold: The Dorothy Stratten Story. Continuing as a director-for-hire, she took in episodes of other major series such as The Dukes of Hazzard (1982), Hart to Hart (1982-83), Cagney & Lacey (1984), Remington Steele (1985-86), the Dynasty spin-off The Colbys (1986), Hill Street Blues (1983-86), Miami Vice (1987), Beauty and the Beast (1987), LA Law (1988-92), Law & Order (1993), Dr Quinn, Medicine Woman (1996), Beverly Hills 90210 (1994-98) and Baywatch (2000). She then retired to Mallorca.

Beaumont's first marriage, to the actor Olaf Pooley (1982-93), ended in divorce. In 1994, she married the cinematographer Michael J Davis; he died in 2008. Amanda, the daughter of her first marriage, died in 1989. Beaumont is survived by her brother, Christopher Toyne, a producer.

Anthony Hayward

Gabrielle Beaumont, director, born 7 April 1942; died 8 October 2022

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@guardianobits

Other lives



Lionel Burman

Museum curator and conservationist with a great knack for assembling creative displays and exhibitions

My father, Lionel Burman, who has died aged 94, was a museum curator and conservationist who worked mostly in Liverpool and the north-west of England. His museum displays were often ahead of their time and he also played an important role in the conservation of Liverpool's social history.

Lionel was born in Hampstead, north London, to Jewish parents, Winnie (nee Cohen) and her husband, Leonard, a textiles buyer. At the outbreak of the second world war he and his four siblings were evacuated to Birkdale in Lancashire, while his father was drafted into military intelligence in Bromsgrove, Worcestershire.

Lionel attended King George V school in Southport, where he excelled at drawing, painting and sculpture. He then continued his studies at the Liverpool School of Art before being called up on national service in the RAF. Operating as a navigator in a Mosquito combat aircraft, he flew over the rubble of Europe at the end of the war.

After returning home, he went on to teach art in various schools in Liverpool, Oldham and Manchester. It was while he was in Manchester, in 1958, that he met Sandra Moss at a Jewish social club, and they married in 1965.

Soon afterwards they moved to Barnard Castle in County Durham, where my father went to work as a curator at the Bowes Museum. In 1971, he got a job at Liverpool Museum, as head of the department for decorative arts. He was tasked with setting up a decorative arts gallery, an ambitious project at the time. In some of his displays he began to use interactive computers, which was somewhat unheard of in the 1980s.

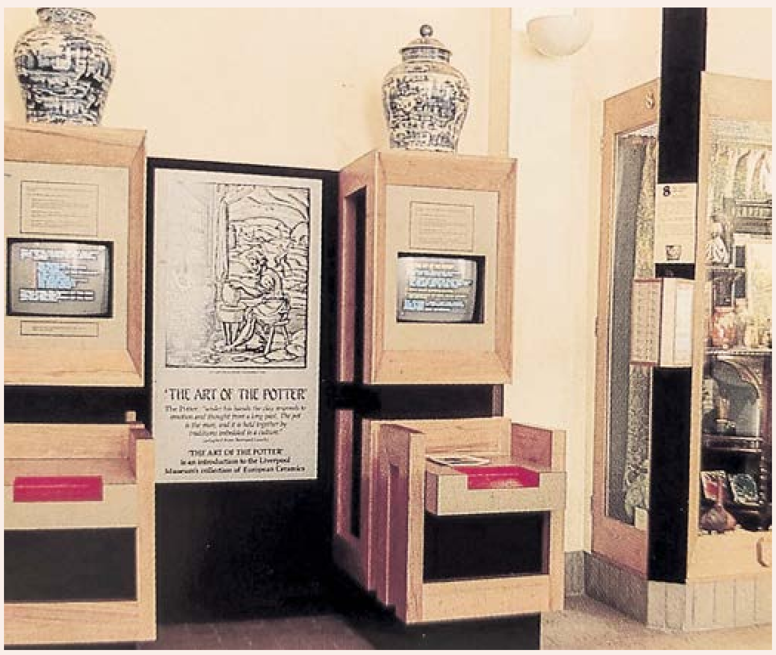
It was also during this period that he and his team would perform acts of "rescue archaeology", after hearing news of a demolition or clearance at an urban site. This would lead to them saving many pieces of pottery and shards of ceramics. Such interventions played an important part in preserving Liverpool's social history.

My father loved his work in the museums, galleries and in academia, and his passion was infectious on those around him. He worked in Liverpool Museum until his retirement, in 1992, aged 64, after which he took on a fellowship at Liverpool University, regularly lecturing on the decorative arts, especially ceramics. He was a director of the Bluecoat Display Centre, a craft and design gallery in Liverpool, and helped arrange displays at the city's Walker art gallery and at Chester Cathedral.

He also continued to write academic papers on the arts as well as semi-biographical short stories based on his postwar life, and spent much time campaigning online for the left-of-centre political matters that he cared about.

He is survived by Sandra, me, his grandson Zach and his brother Michael.

Daniel Burman



The Art of the Potter, curated by Lionel Burman at Liverpool Museum, 1993

David Browning

Dockworker turned academic in adult education who did pioneering work at Northern College, Barnsley

My friend David Browning, who has died aged 83, was a dockworker for 15 years before becoming an academic and passionate advocate of informal adult education.

In the late 1970s and early 80s, as the outreach tutor at Northern College, Barnsley, David worked with its founder, Michael Barratt Brown, to set up short residential courses that empowered local communities and changed people's lives, particularly women's.

With the future Labour politician Mo Mowlam, then the college administrator, and the folk singer Roy Bailey, a founding governor, David encouraged skills for community action as well as for trades union leadership.

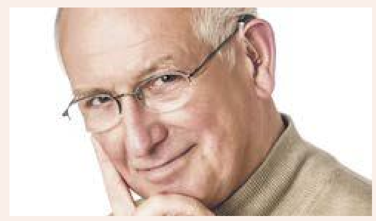
One of three children of Faith (nee Wynn), a school cook, and Thomas Browning, a shipyard engineer and trade unionist, David was born in Hartlepool, County Durham. As boy, he built raised beds in the family's tiny backyard, understanding the importance of sustainable local food growing.

Aged 15, he left Princess Louise boys' school to take up an apprenticeship as a fitter at Blyth shipyard, later attending night school at Northumberland College to gain an ONC in mechanical engineering (1960). The following year he worked for Shell Tankers as a sea-going engineer, then joined the National Coal Board as a maintenance fitter (1962). He then worked as a draughtsman and design engineer for MacGregor International Naval Architects. While there, he was shop steward for the Draughtsmen's Union.

He had married his childhood sweetheart, Sally Ellison, in 1960. As their two daughters, Paula and Claire, grew up, David found time to go to night school. He won a scholarship to study for a diploma in social studies at Ruskin College, Oxford (1971), then a philosophy, politics and economics degree at Magdalen College.

After graduation in 1973, David stayed in Oxford to work as a staff development and training officer for Oxfam. In 1977, the family moved to Edinburgh, for David to take up a training officer job for Scotland's Manpower Services Commission. After Northern College (1979-85), David became director of Manchester Open College Network (1985-93), which enabled adult education tutors to develop community programmes.

Moving to Rothbury in Northumberland in 1993, he worked as a training consultant before joining Northumberland Care Trust as a health development manager (2000-04), establishing men's health projects and linking an organic community farm project



to city sales outlets, promoting sustainable food production.

This interest continued when he retired to Huddersfield and chaired the Kirklees Environment Partnership, supporting local groups in growing their own food.

David's marriage to Sally ended in divorce in 1981. A second marriage, to Lydia Meryll, in 1993, also ended in divorce, in 2007.

He is survived by Paula and Claire, two grandchildren, and his siblings Michael and Margaret.

Ali Stopher

Father Jeremy Davies

Trained medical doctor who became the chief exorcist for the Catholic church in England and Wales

My uncle, Jeremy Davies, who has died aged 87, was the chief exorcist for the Catholic church in England and Wales. His religious beliefs were utterly alien to me.

His views on the role of the devil in daily life were variously horrible ("homosexuality is the work of the devil") and absurd (yoga just as bad). Because of an ancient breach in our family tree, I never met him until March 2020, just as the pandemic was descending. It was a strange encounter.

My first glimpse confirmed my worst fears - this thin, almost skeletal figure, cloaked in black, with only his dog collar blazing white. We shook hands in the church doorway where we had agreed to meet, and he led me to the vestry, where we sat and talked for four hours.

The austere figure proved to be unusually gentle in speech and manner. He told stories with a twinkle in his eye. He had humour! And empathy, shaking his head in wonder at the cruelty of his father, whom he loved but who had abandoned the children from his first marriage, including my own father.

Jeremy was born in Wimbledon, south-west London, the son of Idris Davies, a senior officer at RAF Fighter Command during Jeremy's wartime childhood, and Elizabeth (nee Ponsonby). He went to the King's school, Canterbury, then studied English at St Edmund Hall, Oxford.

He talked to me about the years after he left Oxford in 1957, feeling meaningless, bobbing around in pointless jobs, drifting towards the Catholic church and then studying medicine, and in 1967 going off to work as a doctor in poor communities in Africa. This was a kind man. But still baffling.

He had abandoned medicine because "I felt that I was being called by God." Some of this was purely intellectual: he had read deeply into the history of Christianity and felt impelled to act. But with a touching honesty he confessed that his final decision to be ordained as a Catholic priest, in 1974, came after he did something he felt was "very wrong" and he wanted to atone. He worked as an assistant priest in London until 1987,0 when Cardinal Basil Hume appointed him exorcist.

Although for me - the atheist, yoga-loving former Guardian reporter - his rituals expelling the devil from buildings or people were entirely bizarre, I began to



see glimpses of the world through his eyes, living with the certainty that a malevolent force of almost unlimited power was ruining vulnerable humans. And he - armed only with his crucifix and his god - challenged that force. In its face. Every day. In spite of its terrifying power.

Most of his work had not involved ritual. Simply he had sat in this same vestry, very much like a psychotherapist, with someone whose life was dangling over disaster, allowing them to speak, giving comfort, offering a spiritual safety net to break their fall.

An odd encounter, two strangers sharing nothing apart from a broken family root and yet at the end, we shook hands with real affection. I did not touch another human being for months. An invisible force had descended and set about killing millions of people.

Jeremy is survived by his sister, Miranda.

Nick Davies

Birthdays

Intikhab Alam, cricketer, 81; **Terry Butcher**, footballer, 64; **James Caan**, entrepreneur, 62; **Richard Clayderman**, pianist, 69; **Tanya Cooper**, art historian, 55; **Sir Max Hastings**, editor, writer and historian, 77; **Lord (Roy) Hattersley**, writer, journalist and former deputy leader of the Labour party, 90; **Nicola Horlick**, investment fund manager, 62; **Sienna Miller**, actor, 41; **Lady (Helen) Newlove**, former Victims' commissioner, 61; **Adam Peaty**, Olympic swimmer, 28; **Bridget Prentice**, former electoral commissioner and former Labour MP, 70; **Pat Rafter**, tennis player, 50; **Dame Joan Ruddock**, former Labour MP and minister, 79; **Dame Maggie Smith**, actor, 88; **Gordon Taylor**, former chief executive, Professional Footballers' Association, 78; **Denzel Washington**, actor, 68; **Mary Weiss**, singer, 74.

Puzzles

Yesterday's solutions

Killer sudoku

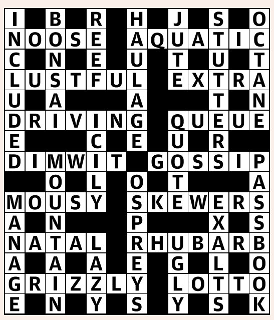
Easy

8	2	3	1	6	4	5	9	7
5	9	6	7	8	2	1	3	4
7	4	1	3	9	5	6	2	8
2	6	7	8	1	3	4	5	9
9	5	8	4	2	7	3	1	6
1	3	4	6	5	9	8	7	2
4	8	9	2	3	1	7	6	5
6	1	5	9	7	8	2	4	3
3	7	2	5	4	6	9	8	1

Medium

5	9	6	4	1	7	8	2	3
2	1	8	6	9	3	4	7	5
4	3	7	5	8	2	1	6	9
9	2	5	7	4	1	3	8	6
8	4	1	2	3	6	5	9	7
7	6	3	9	5	8	2	1	4
3	8	9	1	6	4	7	5	2
1	5	2	3	7	9	6	4	8
6	7	4	8	2	5	9	3	1

Codeword



Cryptic crossword

Solution No. 28,951

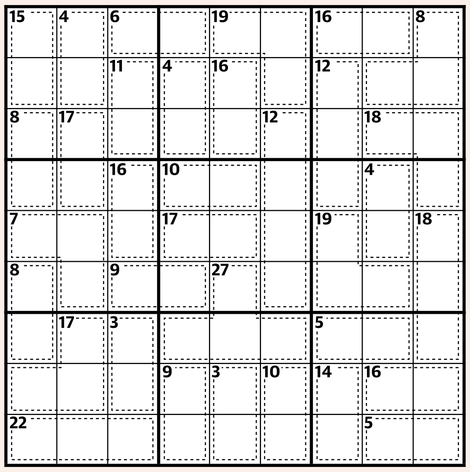


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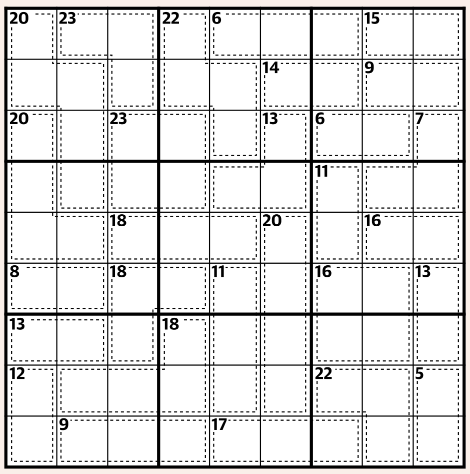
Killer sudoku

Easy

The normal rules of sudoku apply: fill each row, column and 3x3 box with all the numbers from 1 to 9. In addition, the digits in each inner shape (marked by dots) must add up to the number in the top corner of that box. No digit can be repeated within an inner shape.

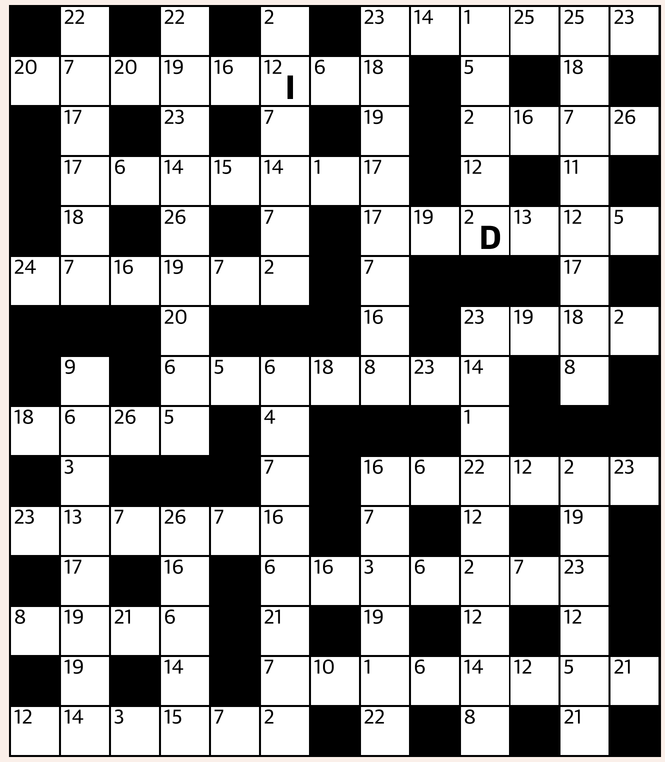


Medium

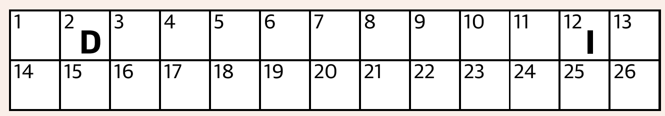


Codeword

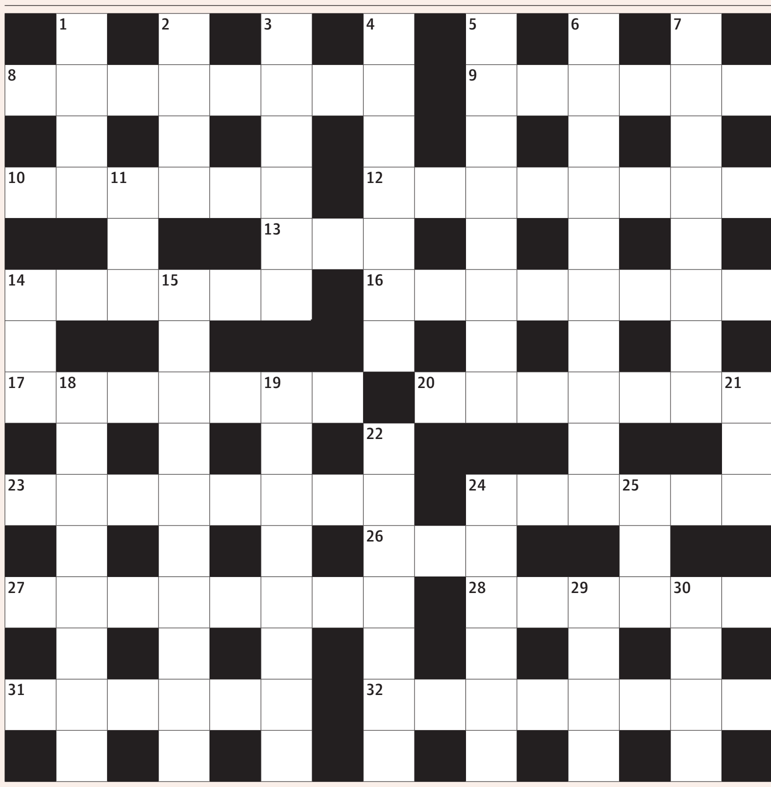
Each letter of the alphabet makes at least one appearance in the grid, and is represented by the same number wherever it appears. The letters decoded should help you to identify other letters and words in the grid.



A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z



Guardian cryptic crossword No 28,952 set by Boatman



Across

8 Boatman not featuring in Enigmatic Variations is attractive (8)

9 Like to monitor typos in Guardian? No way! (6)

10 A curse, deleting one article after another (6)

12 Abuse from security service, apparently a special experience (8)

13 Second of second; second page; second sight (3)

14 Enjoyed Independent: emerged with no content corrected (6)

16 Forever and always, including time with tiny changes (8)

17 Challenges again from different setters (7)

20 OneNote audio input extension (7)

23 Spooner derides brown cowboy (8)

24 Furthest off the mark with last two in Toughie (6)

26 Solver seen in agony – ouch! (3)

27 Stripped of flesh, act fatal: icy tombs found here (8)

28 Both Telegraph and Herald are noteworthy (6)

31 One challenges you to give in, taking on Observer, say (6)

32 Video deception by leaders in dubiously elected executive presidencies fooling all, kindling enmity (8)

Down

1 Get Listener misdirection at last (4)

2 Recognise one with all-consuming interests being upset (4)

3 Boatman replaces leader of house in Slough with fixed gaze (6)

4 Skip Wee Stinker, inverting riddle's outer limits (7)

5 About one oddly intense Genius (8)

6 Certain old penniless escort on an 'orse (10)

7 Release slow Orwellian nurse (8)

11 'Make do with less': politician ousted to go downhill fast (3)

14,21 Rambling hesitation and bluster (6)

15 The officer in charge preceding disloyal person in command, claiming divine authority (10)

18 Times creates puzzle that's rather dry (5,3)

19 Almost domesticated some pigs by the sound of drums (8)

21 See 14

22 Some really do by nature become uplifted by Everyman (7)

24 Awful systems – nothing odd here – create ineffectual people (6)

25 Age of bird, not beast (3)

29 Good! One newspaper has flair (4)

30 What the Inquisitor does: challenges where you must set aside time (4)

The Guardian

Wednesday 28/12/22



Pictures of the year 2022

Heartbreak, horror and hope

War in Ukraine, wildfires in California, protests in Iran, victory for the Lionesses … In this special issue, **Michael Segalov** talks to photographers who captured some of 2022s's most striking and poignant images, selected by features picture editor **Sarah Gilbert**



Cover
A soldier inside the besieged Azovstal steelworks, Ukraine
Dmytro Kozatskyi
16 May Just days after Russia invaded Ukraine, Mariupol - a port city of 430,000 people in the south-east of the country - found itself surrounded. The shelling had been relentless from day one, and by 2 March, Russian troops were only kilometres away. The suffering inflicted on the city's residents became one of the defining stories of the war. Over the months-long siege of the city, thousands died, with the city facing almost total destruction. Held up inside the Azovstal steel plant were the last pockets of Mariupol's resistance. In the plant's tunnels, furnaces and warehouses, soldiers - and hundreds of civilians - sheltered together. On 17 May, they were eventually forced to surrender. Before they did so, Dmytro Kozatskyi, a photographer and a soldier with the Azov regiment, uploaded his images from inside the siege (including this one) to social media, asking that they be shared as widely as possible. Kozatskyi was reportedly released in a prisoner swap in September.



The Queen having tea with Paddington Bear, London
Courtesy of Buckingham Palace
4 June While Queen Elizabeth II reached the milestone of 70 years on the throne in early February, celebrations were delayed until June, to wait for better weather. The ceremonies and events held across the platinum jubilee weekend were watched by millions of people. Parades, street parties and concerts were held involving some of the world's most recognisable faces. But it was a short film - shown at the BBC's Platinum Party at the Palace - which came to symbolise the occasion. In the lighthearted clip, the Queen has tea with a gaffe-prone Paddington Bear (voiced by Ben Whishaw) at Buckingham Palace. Three months later, when the Queen died, officials had to issue a request for mourners to stop leaving tributes of marmalade sandwiches outside the palace.



The Lionesses celebrate their Uefa Women's Euro win, London
Sarah Stier/Uefa/Getty Images
31 July For photographers, press conferences aren't usually hugely interesting. The England manager was talking about what the win meant to her team, young English women and to the sport as a whole, when I heard this rumbling. The team burst in, singing and dancing. When the goalkeeper jumped on to the table, I went into rapid fire mode with my camera. I didn't want to miss a single moment. You can see the smile on their manager's face, letting herself enjoy the electricity; even the reporters got swept up in it. In professional sports, so much is choreographed and protected by media handlers. Witnessing spontaneous events like this reminds you why we are drawn to them.



▲ An emotional goodbye at a train station, Odesa, Ukraine
Salwan Georges/the Washington Post/Getty Images

5 March I was in Kharkiv when the war started; by day 11, I'd made it to Odesa. The train station was heaving with women, children and elderly people. I asked an official who these people were; I was told refugees from Mariupol and Kherson. A train approached, and people desperately rushed towards the doors. All the lights were off, to keep it from being targeted.

I was walking up the platform, when I saw a light from one window. There was a man saying an emotional goodbye to a woman who had boarded. I put down my camera. This could be their last goodbye: it's not my place to interrupt it. But the man gave me a nod, so I started to photograph. I found myself weeping behind the camera. As the train started to move, he followed it up the platform. When he couldn't keep up with it, he returned towards me, tears in his eyes. We stood together in silence.

▶ Bernie Sanders sits in the shade, Washington
Kent Nishimura/Los Angeles Times/Getty Images

7 August The Inflation Reduction Act is one of Biden's signature pieces of legislation. Measures like this go through a process called vote-a-rama, when senators can propose an unlimited number of amendments to the bill. Vote-a-ramas often last through the night.

It's a challenge for photographers to cover such events. We're not allowed on to the chamber floor, or to point our cameras at the Senate's doors. So I look for scenes that capture the mood in other ways.

I'd read that Senator Sanders had proposed a bunch of amendments, with almost every other senator opposing him. I saw him sprawled on some steps, taking a break. I knew he'd had a rough night. We made eye contact, then I knelt and took my pictures. It was a chance encounter, but it captured the atmosphere that day better than anything I could have planned: Bernie, an isolated island, holding strong, totally exhausted.





◀ Migrants move a smuggling boat into the water, Gravelines, France
Sameer al-Doumy/AFP/ Getty Images
12 October In October, I was on the beach in Gravelines, near Dunkirk. A few days passed, and I saw nothing. Then, one morning at dawn, I found many people hoping to cross the Channel. They had travelled overnight on buses, and then hid for hours in the darkness near the beach waiting for their moment. At about 8am, this group carried a boat down to the water.

It's sad for me, seeing their struggle. I had my own journey when I was forced to leave Syria, my home country. I was lucky to have papers, but not everyone is as fortunate. When I talk to people in situations like this, I hear how desperate they are; the trauma and danger they've lived through. They know the dangers of crossing - that they risk their lives - but they have no other option.





◀ Protesters and mourners gather at the funeral of Mahsa Amini, Iran
AFP Photo/UGC Image
26 October The death of Mahsa Amini on 16 September in Iran sparked protests and unrest that continue to challenge the supreme leader Ali Khamenei's repressive regime. Amini was 22 years old when she died after being detained by Iran's brutal morality police for allegedly breaching the country's strict dress code for women. On 26 October, protesters and mourners made their way towards Aichi cemetery in Saqez - Amini's home town, in the western Iranian province of Kurdistan. Despite heightened security measures, part of a violent crackdown on women-led protests, thousands marched together through the streets to mark 40 days since her death. Many, like this young woman, refused to wear headscarves.



◀ Newlyweds celebrate among the ruins of Kharkiv, Ukraine
Sergey Bobok/AFP
3 April I've remained at home in Kharkiv since the war began, along with my family. I've worked in combat zones before, but this was different - people being killed on the streets of my city.

In the photo we see Anastasia Grachova and Anton Sokolov - both work in healthcare. During the first days of the invasion, they treated the people who remained. Then they became volunteers and helped provide needy residents with medicine. They had been dating for two years, but Anton had proposed in late February. Their wedding ceremony took place at the university metro station, which was being used as a shelter. The photoshoot was held among the destroyed buildings in the city centre.

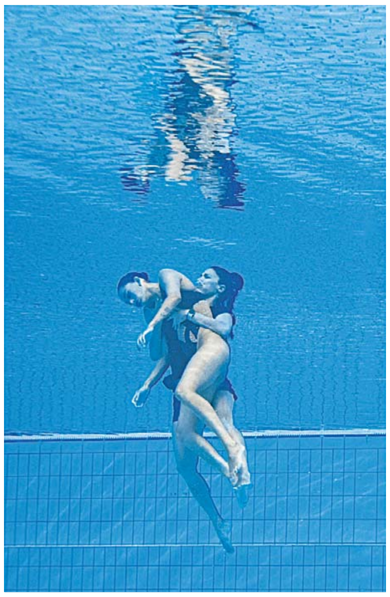
This photo is about love - our desire to be close in times of danger. I saw it again and again in Kharkiv: parents hiding their children from bombing; neighbours helping each other; a doctor who lived in the hospital for two weeks to help as many victims as possible. But this is also a photograph about the perseverance and invincibility of Kharkiv residents, despite death, destruction and huge losses.



◀ A plane drops retardant over a wildfire, Hemet, California
David Swanson/Reuters
7 September In other states, journalists have to stay behind police lines, but in California we're allowed into the fires. Heading in always feels counterintuitive - you're going directly towards danger. On my first day at the Fairview fire in Hemet, there had been two fatalities. By day two, there were more resources on hand. I found a spot on a hill, looking out at a neighbourhood at risk, watching smaller planes and helicopters paint a retardant line to stop the fire subsuming the buildings. Then, just over the burning ridge line, this huge tanker plane made its way past us. Science tells us what climate breakdown means. Seeing it up close, so close to home, is really alarming.



◀ A father carries his son to be buried after the Cianjur earthquake, Indonesia
Anditya Aji/AFP
22 November It took me two hours by motorbike to reach the centre of the Cianjur earthquake in West Java. I arrived at 6am. Emergency tents were being put up to shelter the dead, the injured and the tens of thousands who'd seen their homes destroyed. When I arrived, the death toll was apparently 100, but ended up at least three times that. I spoke to a man whose home had been crushed. He told me about a village close by that had really suffered. When I got there, rescue teams were yet to arrive. Children's bodies were being carried through what used to be a street, as preparations began for their Islamic funerals. That's when I saw a father carrying his son to be buried. I took a photograph from behind, as he slowly walked to his child's final resting place.



▲ **Anita Alvarez faints during the World Aquatics Championships, Budapest, Hungary**
Oli Scarff/AFP/Getty Images
22 June There's an underwater robot camera that is used to shoot major events in swimming, but I'd barely used the kit before the championships this year. One afternoon, I was covering the solo free competition alone in the aquatics pool. While the camera is underwater, I sit at the very top of the highest grandstand to give myself the broadest view possible. I am nowhere near the pool itself but I have a live feed through the viewfinder to control the camera.

Midway through the session, after American swimmer Anita Alvarez's attempt, I was checking back over the images I'd taken when the auditorium went silent. I looked down at the pool, and saw this dark shape in the water. My iPad showed a crystal clear live stream: Anita was sinking towards the bottom. I had started to take pictures when Anita's coach, Andrea Fuentes, dived in to rescue her. It was over within seconds. What could have been an image of tragedy was, thankfully, one of true heroism.



◀ **A guard treating an immigrant at the southern border, Arizona**
Mario Tama/Getty Images
19 May There's a stretch of the Arizona border with Mexico where crossing into the US is fairly straightforward, through a shallow river. I headed there after hearing reports of large numbers of people crossing. I've covered the border before, but never at this location.

At dusk, a large group of Jamaican people crossed. Most collapsed on US soil, but soon recovered. This one man was leaning against the fence, though, confused and drained. Border agents radioed for a medical team. Fifteen minutes later, he was on an IV drip, which a border guard held.

You see incredible drive and desperation on the US border. People risk their lives, and many die every year of dehydration and heatstroke. For many, it's a fight for survival for them and their families.



◀ **Memorial for school shooting victims, Texas**
Christopher Lee/New York Times/Redux/eyevine
30 May I received a mid-morning call from an editor: there had been a shooting in Uvalde, a place I know well, maybe 90 minutes drive from me. At Robb elementary school, 21 people had been killed; there was tension and tragedy in the air. It's a small community, so, for most locals the press presence was overwhelming. The pain was being felt way beyond the town, with support pouring in from all over.

This picture was taken a week later. In the centre of the town's main square is a park and fountain. Aside from the school, this became the main memorial site. It started with a few candles, but grew pretty rapidly. I wanted the memorial to be the focus of this image, while also expressing so many people passing through. That is captured, I hope, in the image's movement.



◀ **Jared Leto and Alessandro Michele at the Met Gala, New York**
Krista Schlueter/New York Times/Redux/eyevine
2 May Usually, I shoot the Met Gala afterparties; this was my first time on the red carpet. I like to roam, getting up close and personal with people. Here, that wasn't possible. The carpet looks big on TV and in pictures, but it's actually tiny. Lots of us were crammed in, making it more claustrophobic than glamorous. It's chaotic, too; multiple celebrities in front of you at the exact same moment. They're everywhere, and you don't always have time to work out what is happening. I always look forward to Alessandro's appearances; he always brings quirkiness and humour. I like it when people bring some lightness to these events: it's easy to forget it's a party.



◀ **A tree full of budgerigars, Australia**
Charles Davis

19 May Budgerigars are desert specialists, searching out grass for seeds to eat wherever they can find it. Across central Australia, they converge at sunrise near water sources to mingle and drink together. The budgies don't stick around in one place long: you have to move fast, before they fly to their next location. People chase them across the country.

I was filming out in central Australia in May when someone tipped me off about this remote spot, an hour north of Alice Springs. I hired a car, arriving before dawn. By sunrise there were 30 or 40 birds there. With so many birds of prey around, the budgies showed little interest in this solo photographer.

From the trees they head down to the water in a murmuration. You can't imagine the noise: surrounded by this swooshing, it's like being in a helicopter with no exit. It's cold when they fly on top of you, they move that much air. I spent four days watching a handful of trees, waiting for the right moment and lighting. It puts you in your place in the pecking order, experiencing moments like that.



▶ **Protesters at a Roe v Wade demo, New York**
Lynsey Addario

25 June I was having dinner with old friends at a Manhattan restaurant when we heard that Roe v Wade had been overturned – the precedent that gave women the right to manage their own bodies through abortion. As an American woman, I couldn't believe what was happening in my country. I was struggling to find the words to explain how I felt, when out of the window, I could see throngs of protesters on Park Avenue. I only had a little point-and-shoot camera and my phone with me. But I had to get out there – I couldn't resist photographing this moment in history.

I am so pleased I saw first-hand so many people defiant and angry. It's rare to see people in the US turn up on this scale. Once the numbers dwindled, we went back to our meal. The sting from the news hadn't gone away, but knowing thousands and thousands of people were prepared to voice their discontent provided me with hope that at least we wouldn't take this quietly.



▲ **A young pitch invader is removed, Southampton**
Hannah McKay/Reuters

27 August It was right at the start of the Premier League season when I went to Southampton for the club's clash against Manchester United. It was one of the first games after Cristiano Ronaldo rejoined his old team. With him around, you expect an exciting game, but this one really wasn't. I was sitting at a bad end of the pitch; only one goal was scored, far away from me. It was a hot day and the light was awful. By the final whistle, I was miserable. I snapped a few pictures of the teams shaking hands and had started to pack away when I looked up to see a child being dragged from the middle of the grass by security. You see pitch invaders during matches a lot, but rarely after the full-time whistle. I guess this young kid wanted to get near a hero of his. It certainly made my dull day a little more interesting.

▶ **A chorus of babies at Glyndebourne**
Robbie Jack/Corbis/Getty Images

1 August I've been going to Glyndebourne in East Sussex, since 1993, and over the decades I've probably photographed 100 of their productions. I'm usually invited to shoot a rehearsal close to curtain up, in the main auditorium. There was an opera double bill: first was Poulenc's Les Mamelles de Tirésias. I'd never photographed this show before. It has a bizarre story, involving thousands upon thousands of babies. There's almost an optical illusion at play – it's better left unexplained, I think.

I've photographed more than 1,000 operas now, but Covid was devastating. Primarily in taking lives, of course, but also for what it did to arts and culture. For me, theatre is medicine. I've had my own brush with mortality this year; right now, I'm fighting cancer. Still, I left hospital with tubes hanging out so I could photograph Sir Ian McKellen.





▲ **A protest against Covid-19 mandates, Maryland**
Alex Kent
5 March During the pandemic, I started documenting the anti-mandate protests. At first I was in Canada, where truckers blocked roads, before it moved over to the US. For those of us who had watched the "stop the steal" protests closely, the 6 January storming of the Capitol wasn't hugely surprising. I wanted to keep an eye on this new wave, in case it led to another major conflict. I followed them in Tennessee and New York, before I heard about a protest in Hagerstown, Maryland. It was being held in an abandoned rural fairground, but being so close to Washington DC, there was talk they might attempt to block roads into the capital.

The atmosphere was actually pretty mild; it was more of a weekend-long rally - lots of Trump flags - than direct action. It was a general conservative get-together. It felt like a music festival, but with no shows. It was an expression of identity, as things often are, I think: people looking for some sort of community.

▶ **Amjad Ali Laghari in a flooded mosque, Pakistan**
Gideon Mendel: Fire/Flood exhibition in the Soho Photographers Quarter at The Photographers' Gallery, supported by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
23 September I travelled to Pakistan five weeks after the floods hit the country. This was my first day of shooting after arriving in Sindh province. We had a boat, to allow us to reach flooded villages. In one village - Goth Bawal Khan - most properties were empty, but we found two men camped out on the roof of a house. One of them was this man: Amjad Ali Laghari. The water in his house was too deep for us to stand in, so we travelled by boat to the village mosque together. After he retrieved the holy books that had survived, I took his portrait. The symmetry of the arch and the reflection below is geometric - it creates a sense of disturbing beauty that is hard to look away from.





Vicky McClure as Stella Tomlinson and Johnny Harris as Charles Stone

Review Without Sin
ITVX

A taut thriller that unravels years of secrets, trauma and guilt

★★★★☆



Rebecca Nicholson

Without Sin is a heavyweight thriller cut from the same cloth as Happy Valley and Save Me, so fans of deep-rooted trauma and grief rejoice, if that's the sort of thing you do. Either way, this Nottingham-based four-parter is a very strong entry to the genre, taut and solid and compelling, and it does not outstay its welcome.

The ever-watchable Vicky McClure stars as Stella, a cabby grieving for her teenage daughter Maisy, who was murdered several years earlier. As you might expect, Stella's life has been utterly transformed by the tragedy. She has split up with her husband, Paul (Hullraisers' Perry Fitzpatrick), who is in a new relationship and who has been able to at least offer the illusion of moving forward. She has cut herself off from her social life, smokes too much weed, and gave up the office job she loved to spend long nights driving around the city dealing with drunken and difficult customers. She is in stasis, unable to do much more than simply get through the hours.

Fellow This Is England alumnus Johnny Harris plays Charles Stone, a drug dealer who grew up on the same estate as Stella, became the muscle for a local gang, and is now in prison for Maisy's murder. Charles is hard to read and prone to violent outbursts. He requests to be part of a restorative justice programme, in which a mediator reaches out to Stella and Paul for a meeting, with the idea that Charles will atone for his sins and that somewhere, somehow, Stella and Paul may get the answers they need to process what has happened to their family.

It does not, however, play out like that. The initial meeting in prison is the spark for a thickly knotted conspiracy of sorts that slowly unravels into a dense mystery, in which nobody can be taken at their word. The drama does an excellent job of keeping you guessing as to everyone's motives and levels of guilt. There is a mess of half-truths to untangle, among family, friends, organised criminals, small-time crooks, lost kids and hopeless adults. Everyone is hiding something, and it's all just waiting to come out of the shadows.

The title points towards the idea that nobody is entirely innocent. When it comes to the drug trade, Without Sin makes its point about middle-class hypocrisy very well, without laying it on too thick. It has a strong grasp of the politics of small working-class communities, in which no secret lasts for long because someone always knows someone who's been talking about it. It also hints at complicated feelings around social mobility. Stella is from the estate, but she and Paul lived in a big, fancy house and once drove a Range Rover. Some of the characters have a foot in each world, and it isn't always comfortable for them. These are small details, but they give the series a richness beyond the traditional whodunnit-type structure that it hangs on.

When it comes to the mystery of Maisy, the story twists and turns. In Nottingham, Stella becomes obsessed with finding out the truth of what happened to her daughter, while Charles is dealing with his psychological issues in prison, as well as the politics of the criminal underworld and even the politics of his own cell. Each of the four episodes finishes on a proper cliffhanger, and by the time it all comes out in the wash during the finale, there have been more than enough dead ends and red herrings to keep us hooked. It just about avoids the occasional ITV drama curse of having a run of solid episodes then throwing it all away on an implausible, far-fetched ending.

McClure is predictably great as Stella, who seems to operate at a level of numb clinging-on, until the meeting with Charles pushes her into action. Harris is similarly fantastic, never quite revealing what side he is going to come out on. He can be kind, and he can snap. Nobody here earns our full sympathy, and parents, in particular, have a lot to answer for.

This isn't the kind of drama that whacks you with bombshell after bombshell, but instead it slowly brings everything to the boil, nudging the temperature up and up. The steady, melancholic pace seems a fitting tone for the drudgery of grief. This might not be your first stop for festive cheer, but if you're up for a top-notch wallow in a miserable guessing game, this is it.

What's On
Scan the QR code below to sign up for the What's On newsletter, our free TV email with the best reviews, news and exclusive writing direct to your inbox every Monday

Mayflies
9pm, BBC One



This beautifully told two-part story is an adaptation of Andrew O'Hagan's novel, delicately tackling male friendship, loyalty and grief. When Tully Dawson (Tony Curran) tells his best pal Jimmy (Martin Compston) that he has terminal cancer, the two men reminisce over old times growing up in a working-class coastal town near Glasgow during the 80s. Curran is deeply moving as a man who refuses to let death have the last laugh, with Ashley Jensen as his firecracker wife Anna.

Hollie Richardson

Dogs in the Wild: Meet the Family
8pm, BBC One
Meet the canids, a global family with 37 members, including wolves, foxes, jackals and dogs. While domestic breeds have been part of human households since Paleolithic times, their wild cousins are less familiar. In this three-part series Chris Packham meets the animals, with the big-eared fennec fox being an instant favourite.
Ellen E Jones

Vienna Blood
9pm, BBC Two
The wonderfully evocative period sleuther concludes with a juicy case: a film star is in attendance at a glitzy premiere, then spoils it by dying of poisoning during the screening. She's an old patient of Max's, but her backstory is even richer than it looks and the investigation leads into the darker corners of turn-of-the-century Austrian politics.
Jack Seale

Jon and Lucy's Party of the Year
9pm, Channel 4
Jon Richardson and Lucy Beaumont call on their pals for a boozy bonanza in the run-up to the new year. Romesh Ranganathan, Judi Love and Tom Allen join in the fun, which involves challenging a Lioness to do a TikTok and strapping one of their hosts to a spinning wheel. **HR**

New Amsterdam
9pm, Sky Witness
Abortion rights are in the spotlight in the first of tonight's double-bill of this medical drama. As a patient faces a pregnancy that puts her life in danger, she finds herself turning to staff about her legal options. Don't expect it to make the US judiciary look great.
Alexi Duggins

Rosie Molloy Gives Up Everything
10pm, Sky Comedy
Rosie (Sheridan Smith) continues her scattergun efforts to clean up her act and kick her habits, this time ditching rehab to hang out with a hippy couple who run a mobile drug-dealing empire before accidentally uncovering a family secret. Smith is such an empathic screen presence that it's hard not to root for her.
Katie Rosseinsky

BBC One

6.0 **Breakfast** (T) **9.0** Attenborough: 60 Years in the Wild (T) (R) **10.0** FILM A Dog's Journey (2019) (T) **11.40** FILM Wallace & Gromit in the Curse of the Were-Rabbit (2005) (T) **1.0** News (T) **1.15** Regional News and Weather (T) **1.25** Zog (T) **1.55** Zog and the Flying Doctors (2020) (T) **2.20** FILM Finding Dory (2016) (T) **3.50** FILM Moana (2016) (T) **5.30** Pointless Celebrities (T) (R) **6.15** News (T) **6.35** Regional News and Weather **6.45** The Weakest Link (T) **7.30** EastEnders (T)

8.0 **Dogs in the Wild: Meet the Family** (T) Chris Packham narrates a documentary following the lives of wild dog packs across the world.
9.0 **Mayflies** (T) Two friends are reunited 30 years after the greatest summer of their lives when one gets terrible news. Drama, with Tony Curran and Martin Compston.

10.0 **News** (T)
10.25 **Regional News** (T) Weather
10.30 FILM **Pirates of the Caribbean: Salazar's Revenge** (2017) (T) Adventure, starring Johnny Depp.
12.30 **Michael McIntyre's Christmas Wheel** (T) (R) **1.30** A Question of Sport: Christmas Special (T) (R) **2.0** Weather (T) **2.05** News (T)

BBC Two

6.35 **Sign Zone** See Hear (T) **7.05** Between the Covers (T) (R) **7.35** The Polar Bear Family and Me (T) (R) **8.35** Jay's Yorkshire Workshop (T) (R) **9.35** FILM The Third Man (1949) (T) **11.15** Homes Under the Hammer (T) (R) **12.15** Bargain Hunt: Ceramics Special (T) (R) **1.0** Great British Railway Journeys (T) (R) **1.30** FILM South Pacific (1958) (T) **3.55** The Real Marigold on Tour (T) (R) **4.55** FILM Whisky Galore! (2016) (T) **6.30** Celebrity Antiques Road Trip (T) **7.30** Festive House of Games (T)

8.0 **Only Connect** (T) Two teams battle for the title of Champion of Champions.
8.30 **Christmas University Challenge** (T) The first of this year's semi-finals.
9.0 **Vienna Blood** (T) An actress is murdered at a silent movie premiere, leaving Max and Oskar in search of men with dangerous obsessions.

10.30 FILM **Heat** (Michael Mann, 1995) (T) A detective becomes obsessed with capturing a career criminal. Thriller, starring Al Pacino and Robert De Niro.
1.15 **Sign Zone** Trailblazers: A Rocky Mountain Road Trip (T) (R) **2.15** See Hear (T) (R) **2.45** B&B By the Sea (T) **5.15** This Is BBC Two (T)

ITV1

6.0 **Good Morning Britain** (T) **9.0** Lorraine (T) **10.0** This Morning (T) **12.30** Loose Women (T) **1.30** News and Weather (T) **1.35** Local News and Weather (T) **1.45** Ninja Warrior UK: Race for Glory (T) (R) **2.45** FILM Hotel Transylvania (Genndy Tartakovsky, 2012) (T) **4.30** Tipping Point (T) **5.30** The Chase (T) **6.30** Local News and Weather (T) **6.45** News and Weather (T) **7.0** Coronation Street (T)

8.0 **The Voice Kids** (T) The young finalists take to the stage for the final, with support from coaches Ronan Keating, Danny Jones, Pixie Lott and will.i.am. Last in the series.

10.0 **News** (T) Weather
10.15 FILM **Die Hard 2** (Renny Harlin, 1990) (T) Action thriller sequel, starring Bruce Willis and Bonnie Bedelia.
12.20 **All Elite Wrestling: Rampage** (T) **1.15** Shop: Ideal World **3.0** Bradley & Barney: Breaking Dad at Christmas (T) (R) **3.50** Unwind With ITV (T) **5.05** Festive Food We Love (T) (R)

Channel 4

6.35 **The King of Queens** (T) (R) **7.20** Everybody Loves Raymond (T) (R) **8.10** The Simpsons (T) (R) **9.35** FILM Playing With Fire (Andy Fickman, 2019) (T) **11.30** Chateau DIY at Christmas (T) (R) **12.30** News (T) **12.35** The Greatest Snowman 2022 (T) (R) **2.05** Billionaire Blooms at Christmas (T) (R) **3.05** FILM Dad's Army (Norman Cohen, 1971) (T) **5.0** A Place in the Sun (T) **6.0** Hollyoaks (T) (R) **6.30** News (T) **6.50** FILM Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle (Jake Kasdan, 2017) (T)

9.0 **Jon and Lucy's Party of the Year** (T) Jon Richardson and Lucy Beaumont host a Christmas getaway with some of their closest friends Romesh Ranganathan, Judi Love and Tom Allen.

10.0 **8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown Christmas Special** (T) (R)
11.05 **Celebrity I Literally Just Told You With Jimmy Carr** (T) (R)
12.10 FILM **Little Fockers** (2010) (T) **1.50** FILM Rosemary's Baby (1968) (T) **4.10** Couples Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **5.0** A Year at Jimmy's Farm (T) (R) **5.55** Countdown (R)

Channel 5

6.0 **Milkshake!** **9.15** Entertainment News (T) **9.20** Friends (T) (R) **9.45** FILM A Cinderella Story (Mark Rosman, 2004) (T) **11.45** FILM The Secret Garden (Agnieszka Holland, 1993) (T) **2.10** FILM The Man in the Iron Mask (Randall Wallace, 1998) (T) **4.15** FILM The Mask of Zorro (Martin Campbell, 1998) (T) **6.55** News (T) **7.0** World's Strongest Man 2022 (T) **7.55** News (T)

8.0 **Inside the Tower of London at Christmas** (T) (R) Emma Bell has a bold plan to transform the fortress into a spectacular winter wonderland, inspired by the tower's famous menagerie.
9.0 **Riptide** (T) Alison's suspicions rise when she learns that Ethan argued with Sean on the beach.

10.0 **Adele: 30 Greatest Moments** (T) (R) Memorable events from the singer's career.
11.55 **Most Shocking Celebrity Moments in Pop** (T) (R)
1.45 **The Live Casino Show** (T) **3.50** Great British Gardens: Season By Season With Carol Klein (T) (R) **5.25** House Doctor (T) (R) **5.50** Pip and Posy (T) (R)

BBC Four

7.0 **Winter Walks** (T) (R) Baroness Sayeeda Warsi goes rambling in the Yorkshire Dales. **7.30** Great Continental Railway Journeys (T) (R) Michael Portillo's journey brings him to Sicily.

8.0 **Royal Institution Christmas Lectures With Dame Sue Black** (T) Prof Black explains the scientific detective process to identify the dead and the living.
9.0 **PQ17: An Arctic Convoy Disaster** (T) (R) The story of an allied convoy of 35 ships heading for the Russian port of Arkhangelsk in 1942.

10.0 **The Real T-Rex With Chris Packham** (T) (R) A look at new research into T rex.
11.0 **Tutti Frutti** (T) (R) Suzi gets a house call from her dentist.
12.0 **Tutti Frutti** (T) (R) The tour ends. Last in the series.
1.10 **Winter Walks** (R) **1.40** Great Continental Railway Journeys (R) **2.10** Royal Institution Christmas Lectures (T) (R)

Other channels

BBC Three
7.0pm FILM Ghostbusters (1984) **8.40** FILM Edward Scissorhands (1990) **10.20** Mood **11.05** Mood **11.50** Inside Classical: Afrobeats Concerto **12.50** Tonight With Target **1.35** The Rap Game UK **2.40** Hot Property **3.10** Freeze: Back on Thin Ice

Dave
6.0am Teleshopping **7.0** Dara Ó Briain's Go 8 Bit **7.45** Expedition With Steve Backshall **9.40** World's Most Dangerous Roads **11.0** Red Bull Soapbox Race 2022 **12.0** James May's Cars of the People **1.0** QI XL **2.0** Would I Lie to You? **2.40** Would I Lie to You? **3.20** Would I Lie to You? **4.0** Top Gear USA Special **5.0** Top Gear: Polar Challenge **6.0** Richard Osman's House of Games **6.40** QI XL **7.40** Would I Lie to You? **8.20** Would I Lie to You? **9.0** QI **9.40** QI **10.20** Would I Lie to You? **11.0** Taskmaster: Champion of Champions **12.0** Have I Got a Bit More News for You **1.0** Mock the Week **1.40** QI **2.15** Would I Lie to You? **2.45** Mel Giedroyc: Unforgivable **4.0** Teleshopping

E4
6.0am Hollyoaks **7.0** Ramsay's Hotel Hell **8.0** Black-ish **9.0** How I Met Your Mother **10.0** The Goldbergs **11.0** The Big Bang Theory **2.0** FILM The Karate Kid Part II (1986) **4.15** Rude(ish) Tube Shorts **4.30** Modern Family **5.30** The Big Bang Theory **6.30** Hollyoaks **7.30** Modern Family **9.0** Gogglebox Festive Special **10.35** Naked Attraction **11.35** First Dates at Christmas **12.45** The Inbetweeners **1.50** Gogglebox Festive Special **3.15** Summer House **4.0** The Big Bang Theory **4.25** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **5.15** The Goldbergs

Film4
11.0am FILM The Kid Who Would Be King (2019) Fantasy adventure, starring Louis Ashbourne Serkis and Rebecca Ferguson. **1.35** FILM Mrs Doubtfire (1993) Comedy, starring Robin Williams. **3.55** FILM Now You See Me 2 (2016) Crime thriller sequel, starring Jesse Eisenberg. **6.40** FILM The Day After Tomorrow (2004) Disaster thriller, starring Jake Gyllenhaal and Dennis Quaid. **9.0** FILM Le Mans '66 (2019) Fact-based drama, starring Matt Damon and Christian Bale. **12.05** FILM Saint Maud (2019) Horror, starring Morfydd Clark and Jennifer Ehle. **1.50** FILM Carrie (1976) Stephen King horror, starring Sissy Spacek and Piper Laurie

ITV2
6.0am Unwind With ITV **6.10** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **6.45** Love Bites **7.45** Secret Crush **8.40** In for a Penny **9.10** Ninja Warrior UK: Race for Glory **10.10** FILM Dr Dolittle (1998) **11.55** FILM Garfield (2004) **1.30** Family Fortunes **2.35** Alan Carr's Epic Gameshow: Celebrity Special **3.35** Catchphrase: Catchiest Moments **4.40** FILM Penguins of Madagascar (2014) **6.25** FILM Shazam! (2019) **9.0** FILM Ocean's 8 (2018) **11.15** Family Guy **11.40** Family Guy **12.10** American Dad! **12.35** American Dad! **1.05** Shopping With Keith Lemon **1.35** Shopping With Keith Lemon **2.0** Shopping With Keith Lemon **2.25** All American **3.15** All American **4.05** Dress to Impress **5.0** Secret Crush **5.50** Unwind With ITV

Sky Max
6.0am Bondi Rescue **7.0** Beyoncé: I Am – World Tour **9.0** Harry Potter: A Who's Who of the Wizarding World **10.0** Harry Potter: Hogwarts Tournament of Houses **11.0** Harry Potter: Hogwarts Tournament of Houses **12.0** The 90s: Cinema's Greatest Decade **1.0** A League of Their Own **2.0** A League of Their Own **3.0** A League of Their Own **4.0** A League of Their Own **5.0** A League of Their Own **6.0** A League of Their Own **7.0** A League of Their Own **8.0** A League of Their Own **9.0** Never Mind the Buzzcocks **9.45** Never Mind the Buzzcocks **10.30** Never Mind the Buzzcocks **11.15** Never Mind the Buzzcocks **12.0** Never Mind the Buzzcocks **12.45** Never Mind the Buzzcocks **1.30** Never Mind the Buzzcocks **2.15** Never Mind the Buzzcocks **3.0** We're Here **4.10** Rob & Romesh vs Drag **5.05** Highway Patrol

Sky Arts
6.0am Arts Uncovered **6.10** Birmingham Opera Company Presents Rhinegold **9.0** The Agatha Christie Hour **10.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **11.0** The World in a Painting **12.15** Peter Pan Live **2.55** André Rieu: La Vie Est Belle **4.30** Tales of the Unexpected **5.0** The Agatha Christie Hour **6.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **7.0** Landscape Artist of the Year 2018 **8.0** Tina Turner: Live in Barcelona **10.10** FILM Tina (2021) **12.20** Tina Turner: One Last Time – Live at Wembley Stadium **2.20** Miles Davis: Miles Electric – A Different Kind of Blue **4.05** Blue Note Records: Beyond the Notes

Sky Atlantic
6.0am Richard E Grant's Hotel Secrets **8.0** Game of Thrones **9.05** Succession **9.0** Game of Thrones **12.15** I Hate Suzie Too **1.20** Perry Mason **2.30** In Treatment **5.0** Hotel Secrets


Saint Maud, Film4

Radio

Radio 3
6.30am Breakfast **9.0** Essential Classics **12.0** Composer of the Week: More One Hit Wonders. Joseph Canteloube and John Cage. (3/5) **1.0** Lunchtime Concert. Accordionist Ryan Corbett plays Liszt's Prelude and Fugue on the Theme B-A-C-H. **2.0** Afternoon Concert. Andrés Orozco-Estrada conducts the Vienna Symphony Orchestra in Summer from Haydn's The Seasons. **4.0** Choral Evensong. From Croydon Minster on the Feast of the Holy Innocents. **5.0** New Generation Artists. The Mithras Trio play Chausson's youthful Piano Trio. **6.15** Words and Music (R) **7.30** Proms at Christmas 2022. Nicholas Collon conducts the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra and violinist Pekka Kuusisto in Debussy's La Mer, Vaughan Williams's The Lark Ascending, Adès's Marchentanze and Sibelius's Symphony No 5 in E flat. (R) **9.30** Proms at Christmas 2022. An organ recital by Nathan Laube, including music by Liszt, Wagner, Franck and Alkan. (R) **11.0** Night Tracks **12.30** Through the Night

Radio 4
6.0am Today **9.0** The Four Freedoms Discussion. The 2022 Reith lecturers reflect on Franklin D Roosevelt's Four Freedoms. (5/5) **9.45** (LW) Daily Service **9.45** (FM) Book of the Week: Giving Up the Ghost (3/5) **10.0** Woman's Hour **11.0** Room 5. Helena Merriman speaks to playwright Abi Morgan. **11.30** Oti Mabuse's Dancing Legends. A profile of Dougie Squires. (4/4) **12.0** News **12.01** (LW) Shipping Forecast **12.04** The New Gurus. Peter McCormack joins Helen Lewis to talk about cryptocurrency. **12.32** Sliced Bread: Electric Toothbrushes (8/20) **12.57** Weather **1.0** The World at One **1.45** Causing a Scene (3/5) **2.0** The Archers (R) **2.15** The Dark Is Rising. Drama. **3.0** Money Box Live **3.30** All in the Mind (R) **4.0** Thinking Allowed (2/7) **4.30** The Media Show **5.0** PM **5.54** (LW) Shipping Forecast **5.57** Weather **6.0** News **6.15** Just William: The Great Performer. By Richmal Crompton (4/5) **6.30** BBC New Comedy Awards 2022 (R) **7.0** The Archers (R) **7.15** Add to Playlist. With Catrin Finch and Neil Brand. **8.0** First Contact. Preparations for first contact with aliens. **8.45** One to One (R) **9.0** A Thorough Examination With Drs Chris and Xand: Can I Change? (R) **9.30** The Media Show (R) **10.0** The World Tonight **10.45** Book at Bedtime (8/10) **11.0** Sandi Toksvig's Hygge. With Prof Brian Cox and Zoe Lyons. (4/4) **11.30** Only After Dark (2/3) **12.0** News **12.15** Wild Bond: The Villain (3/5) **12.30** Book of the Week (3/5) **12.48** Shipping Forecast **1.0** As World Service **5.20** Shipping Forecast **5.30** News **5.43** Prayer for the Day **5.45** Farming Today **5.58** Tweet of the Day (R)

Radio 4 Extra
6.0am Trueman and Riley (3/4) **6.30** A Charles Paris Mystery: Star Trap (3/4) **7.0** Last Christmas (3/5) **7.15** Good News Stories (3/5) **7.30** Relativity (4/4) **8.0** Hancock's Half Hour (10/16) **8.30** Life, Death and Sex With Mike and Sue (5/6) **9.0** The Write Stuff (3/6) **9.30** Trevor's World of Sport (6/6) **10.0** The Piper's Chair **11.0** Trueman and Riley (3/4) **11.30** A Charles Paris Mystery: Star Trap (3/4) **12.0** Last Christmas (3/5) **12.15** Good News Stories (3/5) **12.30** Relativity (4/4) **1.0** Hancock's Half Hour (10/16) **1.30** Life, Death and Sex With Mike and Sue (5/6) **2.0** The Write Stuff (3/6) **2.30** Trevor's World of Sport (6/6) **3.0** The Piper's Chair **4.0** Trueman and Riley (3/4) **4.30** A Charles Paris Mystery: Star Trap (3/4) **5.0** Last Christmas (3/5) **5.15** Good News Stories (3/5) **5.30** Relativity (4/4) **6.0** Hancock's Half Hour (10/16) **6.30** Life, Death and Sex With Mike and Sue (5/6) **7.0** The Write Stuff (3/6) **7.30** Trevor's World of Sport (6/6) **8.0** Raise Your Game **9.0** Hilarious Histories: What's So Funny About the Past? (2/3) **10.0** A Normal **10.30** ReincarNathan (6/6) **11.0** The Million Pound Radio Show (4/6) **11.30** Radio 9 (4/4) **12.0** The Piper's Chair **1.0** Trueman and Riley (3/4) **1.30** A Charles Paris Mystery (3/4) **2.0** Last Christmas (3/5) **2.15** Good News Stories (3/5) **2.30** Relativity (4/4) **3.0** Hancock's Half Hour (10/16) **3.30** Life, Death and Sex With Mike and Sue (5/6) **4.0** The Write Stuff (3/6) **4.30** Trevor's World of Sport (6/6) **5.0** Don Quixote (1/2)

Puzzles

Yesterday's solutions

Wordsearch

U	M	S	C	O	U	T	Y	N
W	R	A	B	O	M	E	D	O
N	A	J	J	S	R	D	E	I
O	N	D	T	O	E	I	N	T
T	K	O	L	P	R	S	C	C
A	O	I	L	E	U	R	P	A
B	A	O	I	E	E	E	A	N
S	Y	M	S	W	C	P	T	E
E	N	L	I	S	T	R	R	D
A	I	E	L	F	I	R	O	N
S	E	F	L	A	K	T	L	F

Solution no 16,424

D	U	B	R	O	V	N	I	K	■	M	■	C
■	N	■	O	■	A	■	N	■	S	O	F	A
O	D	O	U	R	L	E	S	S	■	T	■	R
■	O	■	T	■	O	■	I	■	T	O	M	B
M	■	S	■	F	U	S	S	Y	■	R	■	O
A	N	T	L	E	R	■	T	U	R	B	A	N
N	■	A	■	V	■	■	■	M	■	I	■	A
H	A	M	P	E	R	■	S	M	O	K	E	R
A	■	P	■	R	U	S	T	Y	■	E	■	A
T	O	D	O	■	S	■	R	■	S	■	A	■
T	■	U	■	S	T	R	E	A	K	I	N	G
A	N	T	E	■	L	■	S	■	I	■	N	■
N	■	Y	■	J	E	T	S	E	T	T	E	R

Sudoku no 5904

3	7	5	4	9	1	6	2	8
8	6	1	2	5	3	7	9	4
2	9	4	8	6	7	1	5	3
1	5	2	9	8	6	3	4	7
6	4	3	1	7	2	5	8	9
9	8	7	3	4	5	2	1	6
4	3	6	5	2	9	8	7	1
7	2	8	6	1	4	9	3	5
5	1	9	7	3	8	4	6	2

Word wheel

REINFORCE

Suguru

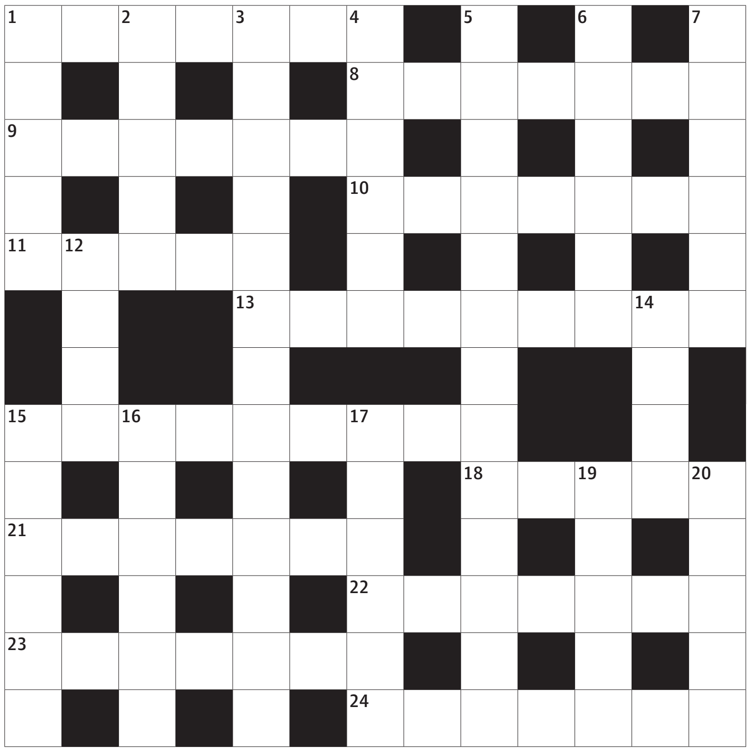
2	1	3	4	2	4
3	4	5	1	3	1
1	2	3	2	4	2
3	4	1	5	1	5
2	5	2	4	2	3
1	3	1	3	5	1

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Quick crossword no 16,425

Across
1 Gangster (7)
8 Apart (7)
9 Smart aleck (4-3)
10 Disappoint (3,4)
11 Arm bones (5)
13 US state (3,6)
15 Liqueur - re-auction (anag) (9)
18 Winter warmer? (5)
21 Hairstyle involving a bun (7)
22 Wildness (7)
23 Small area with a relatively high temperature (3,4)
24 Getting on a bit? (7)

Down
1 Long-distance walker (5)
2 Egg-shaped (5)
3 A "Royal" Warwickshire town (10,3)
4 eg Hollyhock or hibiscus (6)
5 Be up to snuff (3,3,7)
6 Detestable (6)
7 Strong alcoholic drink (6)
12 Potato (in Indian cuisine) (4)
14 Muslim ruler (4)
15 (Of a phrase) instantly memorable (6)
16 Ascribe (to) (6)
17 Car with a rear door and space behind the back seat (6)
19 Small viper (5)
20 Peculiar (5)



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Sudoku no 5905

Medium. Fill the grid so that each row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9. Printable version at theguardian.com/sudoku

								5
		9	8					1
	1		9	3			8	
	4	6			7	2		
		8		9	2			
			4	8		6		9
			1		4		6	
		1				8		
4	3				8			

Suguru

Fill the grid so that each square in an outlined block contains a digit. A block of 2 squares contains the digits 1 and 2, a block of three squares contains the digits 1, 2 and 3, and so on. No same digit appears in neighbouring squares, not even diagonally.

1			1		
				3	
				5	
2					4
			2		

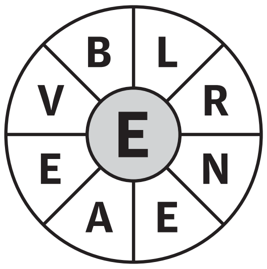
Wordsearch

Can you find 15 words associated with the stage in the grid? Words can run forwards, backwards, vertically or diagonally, but always in a straight, unbroken line.

Y	E	N	E	C	S	Y	G	L
D	E	B	U	T	D	O	M	I
E	B	K	R	E	V	R	I	N
M	L	A	G	A	T	E	R	E
O	P	A	T	U	I	S	A	S
C	R	I	N	D	K	U	A	L
T	O	G	M	I	W	A	S	W
N	S	O	T	E	F	L	I	T
E	R	O	C	N	E	P	D	R
F	L	O	P	C	A	P	E	I
N	E	R	V	E	S	A	N	S

Word wheel

Find as many words as possible using the letters in the wheel. Each must use the central letter and at least two others. Letters may be used only once. You may not use plurals, foreign words or proper nouns. There is at least one nine-letter word to be found. TARGET: Excellent-65. Good-54. Average-40.



Pet corner

For what is the basenji breed of dog most known for?
a. It meows, rather than barks
b. It's the tallest dog breed
c. It's the smallest dog breed
d. It yodels, rather than barks
Answer top right

